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A dialogical analysis of the experiences of Taiwanese athletes competing in professional sports clubs abroad

This dissertation is presented in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Language and Intercultural Communication

2022/2023

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Abstract

The increasing number of professional athletes pursuing careers abroad has attracted acculturation research viewing athletes' accounts of their own experiences as the ultimate truth. However, studying athletes' intercultural experience through such a lens often ignores the contextual factors influencing intercultural communication (IC), which may cause Othering and perpetuate stereotypes. Meanwhile, intercultural communication education (ICE) has grown popular in Taiwan to prepare students to engage in an essentialist conceptualisation of IC. Yet, it remains unclear whether those skills developed through those ICE programmes are applicable in the world context. To fill these gaps, I interviewed four Taiwanese athletes to explore how they navigate between culture, identity, and language when playing for professional sports clubs abroad. Participants' narratives were analysed using Bakhtin's notion of dialogism, which is further interpreted by Dervin (2011) as the liquid approach to interculturality. Based on the dialogical approach to athletes' discourses, the results show that they are constantly shifting between the essentialist and non-essentialist discourses when making sense of their experience. Furthermore, athletes demonstrate shifting attitudes whilst interacting with the team, illustrating that their identity is never finalised but co-constructed with the interlocutors in specific contexts. Finally, it is indicated that speaking the same language does not guarantee successful IC, as misunderstandings can arise due to various factors. In conclusion, I suggest moving beyond the notion of IC that attributes differences between interlocutors to 'the clash between cultures' and focusing on the process of ongoing negotiation of meanings depending on the interlocutors and the context where IC takes place. Further recommendations are discussed on designing ICE programmes targeting student-athletes.

Keywords: Sports communication; Intercultural communication; Intercultural communication education; Dialogism

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research background and rationale

Due to the globalisation of social and economic activities, the number of high-performance athletes pursuing careers abroad has been increasing (Falcous & Maguire, 2011). For instance, in the European BIG 5 football leagues, 46.7% of the active players are expatriate players in the 2015-16 season (Poli et al., 2016). Expatriate players, who travel often and tend to stay short-term in various places (Dolles & Egilsson, 2017), experience hyper-mobile interactions and relations with people in the relocating countries and teams (Ryba et al., 2018). Such unique experiences have attracted extensive study of high-performance athletes' acculturation experiences, focusing on the aspect of adaptation to the local context (Gentile, 2023; Hirose & Meijen, 2022; Meisterjahn & Wrisberg, 2013). As portrayed in these studies, acculturation is often treated as the process for individuals from a different cultural background to acquire skills and practices from the host community (Berry et al., 2002). This concept of seeing culture as a product that can be obtained is often associated with two philosophical perspectives, which are essentialism—classifying people based on their inherent traits or certain characteristics (Holliday et al., 2004)—and culturalism—attributing people's actions solely to their cultural background without considering other factors (Baumann, 1999). However, such conceptualisation of acculturation has been criticised for ignoring the contextual and continuous nature of reality and treating cultures as forces that can modify individuals' behaviour (Chirkov, 2009). In this sense, professional athletes who go abroad to play are forced to become 'the other' by adopting an imagined collective identity without considering the rationale behind those choices as they are exposed to ethnocentric assumptions. Research adopting such a notion of acculturation is described by Dervin (2011) as using the 'solid approach' to intercultural communication (IC), a problematic view of seeing research participants'

accounts as gospel without questioning the hidden messages and ignoring the researcher's influence on data collection and analysis process. Adopting this approach may result in the reinforcement of othering, which is 'using stereotypes and representations about the other when meeting her/him and talking about her/him' (Dervin, 2016, p. 43). To avoid that, Dervin (2011) calls for using 'the liquid approach' to interculturality, reconceptualising culture as embedded in context and time whilst going beyond the account of the research participants to 'examine [their] discursive choices, manipulations, and contradictions' (p.40).

Building upon this view of interculturality, this study investigates four Taiwanese athletes' experiences playing in professional sports clubs abroad. The reason for selecting Taiwanese athletes as the subject of this study is two-fold. The first reason is related to my personal experience working as a sports journalist in Taiwan. I interviewed numerous student-athletes in team sports with dreams of playing abroad but hesitated to do so for fear of language barriers. Their shared concern inspires me to study players who have professional experiences abroad. Another reason is linked to the development of intercultural communication education (ICE) in Taiwan. Whilst the conceptualisation of IC has shifted from static to fluid practices in recent years (Godley, 2012), the prevailing notion that culture is associated with specific countries and there is a certain way to 'correctly' perform IC continues to underpin ICE worldwide (Simpson, 2022). For example, the education policy launched in Taiwan in recent years promotes ICE in terms of respecting and tolerating diversity amongst cultures whilst 'maintain(ing) one's cultural identity and values' (Ministry of Education, 2014, p.9). The essentialist view of culture embedded in this policy is palpable, as it suggests that there is an inherent and unchangeable trait within an individual. It further implies that the mainstream ICE promoted by the government is based on Byram's (1997) ICC model, which advocates the essentialist conceptualisation of culture and

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informs to adoption of certain practices when meeting people from specific cultures. Such a model is also widely used in higher education in Taiwan to assess student's intercultural competence (Lin et al., 2017; Weng, 2020), requesting students to perform IC in a presumed way. My curiosity about whether the IC skills informed by this mainstream conceptualisation of interculturality in Taiwan are applicable to the real-world sporting context motivates me to set the research participants as Taiwanese athletes.

Based on the research participant's conceptualisation of experience playing abroad, this study aims to explore the potential direction of ICE in Taiwan targeting student-athletes who may pursue a professional sporting career abroad in the future. To identify additional insights behind participant's utterances within the co-constructive interaction (Dervin, 2011), I conduct discourse analysis on the athlete's account informed by Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981, 1984) notion of dialogism, which acknowledges that the utterances and the perspectives of speakers are always unique at the moment as they are shaped through speech. Consequently, two research questions (RQs) will be addressed in the study:

1) How do professional Taiwanese athletes make sense of their intercultural experiences when playing in sports clubs abroad?

2) How do they navigate their languages, cultures, and identities when communicating with teammates and coaches?

1.2 Dissertation outline

To answer the RQs, this study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the background, rationale of the research, RQs and the structure of the study. The second chapter reviews the literature on interculturality regarding culture and identity. The development of ICE and the athlete's acculturation experience are also reviewed. Research gaps are identified at the

end of this chapter, leading to the justification of the research topic, proposal, and questions. The following chapter provides an account of the methodological decisions and considerations, including the paradigm adopted for the study, the justification of the qualitative research design, the use of the sampling approach, data collection and dialogical analysis. The next chapter presents the findings and discussion in relation to the literature. The final chapter concludes with a summary of the study, providing implications including recommendations for educators and sports organisations interested in developing ICE programs for student-athletes. The limitations of the research and how it can be extended upon in the future are also provided.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. The overview of intercultural communication (IC)

2.1.1 The essentialist view of IC

The study of IC has received multidisciplinary attention across education and workplace settings since its appearance in the anthropologist Edward T. Hall's book The Silent Language in 1959. To this date, however, the definition of IC remains contested because 'culture' is conceptualised differently by scholars and researchers. 'Culture' has been the centre of attention in the field of intercultural research for years (Dervin & Machart, 2015). Generally, two major approaches are used to conceptualise culture: the essentialist view and the non-essentialist view.

Traditionally, the essentialist approach is adopted in IC studies, considering culture and identity as inherent rather than constructed (Piller, 2012). Here, the essentialist view believes that 'categories have an underlying reality or true nature that one cannot observe directly but that gives an object its identity' (Gelman, 2003, p.3). As is seen from Hall's (1959, 1976) theory of high versus low context culture that categorises communication styles into the one preferred by the collectivistic society and the one favoured by the individualistic society, the essentialist position in conceptualising culture attempts to explain what people tend to follow in different situations based on a set of characteristics (e.g., nationality). Similar essentialist representation of culture is also evident in Hofstede's (1980, 1984) cultural dimension framework where certain factors are viewed as determinants that shape the national culture and associate individuals in the workplace with a particular national identity. In this sense, culture represents the pattern of traits shared by certain groups—at the national level or smaller ones—and is used to explain intergroup differences. The idea of using culture to highlight what 'distinguishes one group of people from another' (Breidenbach & Nyíri, 2009, p.22), echoes Friedman's (1994, p.29) definition of cultural identity,

which is 'the attribution of a set of qualities to a given population' as well as Bauman's concept of (2000, 2004) solid modernity where the national cultural identity is promoted in front of immigrants and foreigners to differentiate groups from one another. Overall, a strong sense of static, bounded, and coherent culture and identity can be identified in the essentialist view of IC. During intercultural encounters, those adopting the essentialist and culturalist IC tend to generalise the behaviour of the interlocutors into national/ethnic/cultural categories—reflecting a culturalist view—and rely on those assumptions to interact with others.

2.1.2 The non-essentialist view of IC

The essentialist of IC, however, is challenged by the non-essentialist view. McSweeney (2002) points out the weakness of Hofstede's essentialist cultural theory, claiming that the overt focus on cultural differences may become 'a restricter not an enhancer of understanding particularities' (p.112). A similar critique on the essentialist view of culture placing over-emphasis on the differences between groups can also be found in other IC studies. A similar critique of placing over-emphasis on the differences between groups can also be found in IC studies researching in education settings (Dervin, 2016; Holliday, 2006; Virkama, 2010) and in workplace settings (Guttormsen, 2018). These works suggest that the imposed impression on individuals may cause Othering, which is 'using stereotypes and representations about the other when meeting her/him and talking about her/him' (Dervin, 2016, p.43) in IC. The strong sense of self-protection to differentiate self from others (Gillespie, 2006) and defining people based on typical characteristics, both promote the hierarchisation between different groups as if one is more privileged above others (Phillips, 2009). To avoid Othering and creating hierarchy, the non-essentialist view of culture focuses on the situational variables influencing individuals' identity (McSweeney, 2002) and acknowledges that culture is co-created and negotiated in social interactions (Holliday, 2011). It is

the historic, intersubjective, and intersectional engagement between individuals that makes culture fluid and multifaceted (Shi-xu, 2001).

In recent IC workplace research, the shift from the essentialised to non-essentialised culture approach is evident. According to Martin and Nakayama (2015), the increasingly globalised workplace challenges the nature of the workplace, which is associated with power and hierarchy (Coleman et al., 2013). Martin and Nakayama (2015) point out the potential of reinforcing hierarchy and power relationships if people are grouped by their nationality, language, or ethnicity. Other scholars (Långstedt, 2018; McSweeney, 2002, 2016; Nathan, 2015) also urge to move away from the traditional workplace cultural framework of Hofstede et al. (2010), to adopt the non-essentialist view of IC in facing the changing views of culture and the shifting identities of individuals over time and space (Nathan, 2015). In this renewed conceptualisation of IC, interlocutors no longer hold onto assumptions and stereotypes in IC. Rather, their discourse, identity, and behaviour vary depending on contexts.

Similar reconceptualisations of IC can also be found in education-related research. For example, Dervin (2011), inspired by the sociologist Bauman's (2004) 'solid' and 'liquid' paradigms to distinguish modernity from postmodernity, proposes using the liquid approach to make sense of the dynamic interactions between individuals. By using the liquid approach to IC, culture is no longer considered as an object categorisable to different dimensions (e.g., nationality, ethnicity), yet it is emergent and co-constructed over time and space with various interlocutors. Such conceptualisation of culture resonates with Baumann (1996), as he argues that 'culture is not a real thing but an abstract and purely analytical notion. It does not cause behaviour, but summarizes an abstraction from it, and is thus neither normative nor predictive' (p.11). In short, adopting the liquid approach to IC is more likely to free the individual from the cage of

stereotypical distinctions because their continuity and change in different contexts with various interlocutors in IC are underlined.

Regarding the research method in IC research, Dervin (2011) suggests adopting dialogism to 'go beyond the surface increasingly and explore various layers of hidden discourses which can provide more hints on identification and the co-constructive aspects of interaction' (p.38). In other words, what should be identified is not merely what the individual prefers to present publicly, but the drives behind the presentation. Recent empirical research adopting a dialogical approach includes the study conducted by Minett et al. (2021) who amplify interviewee's voices whilst analysing Chinese tutors' experience of teaching Afghan students; Mrowa-Hopkin (2022) also examines IC in the online exchanges between students from different countries through dialogical discourse analysis to uncover their shifting stances when describing cultural events.

2.1.3 Navigate through the solid and liquid IC

In the debate between the cultural essentialism and non-essentialism of conceptualising IC, the call to acknowledge the role played by both positions in doing interculturality has risen. For example, Abdallah-Pretceille (2006) describes interculturalism as 'part understanding and part action' (p.480) because one's knowledge of others (e.g., knowledge from prior experience) and how he/she reacts in a specific situation with interlocutors are both part of the IC. Moreover, Abdallah-Pretceille (2006) points out that it is the interactional and reflexive nature of culture makes non-Othering impossible, as the centre of IC discussion is 'the questioning of one's identity in relation to others' (p.476). Such reconceptualisation of IC is echoed by Kecskes (2014) who promotes the concept of intercultural pragmatics and considers IC as a co-constructed process with the engagement of both participants' prior knowledge and experience and their emergent ones in

response to the intercultural situations. For Kecskes (2014), the mainstream non-essentialist view of IC insisting 'that culture in no way imposes ethnic or cultural characteristics onto the communicative behaviour a priori' (p.5) is as one-sided as the traditional cultural essentialisation.

Similar to the above scholars, Dervin (2011, 2016) discourages the polarisation of cultural essentialist and the non-essentialist to IC but proposes to navigate between them by using the Janusian approach, which refers to the two-faced Roman god. As is hinted by its name, what makes the Janusian approach different from the previous concepts is emphasising the contradictory nature of IC. According to Dervin (2016), adopting the Janusian approach to IC means that an individual can shift between the solid approach (e.g., using culture to explain one's behaviour) and the liquid approach (e.g., acknowledging the dynamic co-construction of culture between self and others) in response to different situations in intercultural encounters. It is worth noting that under this Janusian perspective, Othering is unavoidable but by embracing the fluid, dynamic conceptualisation of culture, stereotypes can be reduced. As is described by Dervin (2016), in the Janusian approach 'both uttering stereotypes about a group and suggesting that the members of this group have multiple identities—thus cancelling out the stereotype' (p.116). This reconceptualisation of IC embracing both the essentialist and non-essentialist voices echoes Shi-xu's (2001) argument on the co-construction and ever-shifting of IC, which is described as follows: 'a "misunderstanding", communication breakdown, and indeed, success of conversation, business or cultural relationship, is a joint, co-ordinated, commonly consequential effect.' (p.290). It is this dynamic nature of IC that the Janusian approach comes in effective use as it guides people to embrace the potential contradiction, misunderstanding, and conflict that an individual will encounter in intercultural encounters.

To sum up, the conceptualisation of IC is never finished because requires the co-

construction between individuals in different contexts across space and time and with different interlocutors. Instead of polarising the conceptualisation of culture in IC, the renewed IC focuses on the dialogic relationship between two opposing approaches as they 'exist through each other' (Zhou & Pilcher, 2018, p. 141). The dialogical nature of IC acknowledges that both essentialist and non-essentialist stances play a crucial role in IC.

2.1.4 Identity in IC

Identity is a must-discussed concept whilst examining IC (Dervin & Simpson, 2021). Similar to reconceptualizing culture, the discussion of identity in IC has been shifted from the static, essentialist paradigm to the dynamic, constructivist one (De Fina, 2014). The former paradigm not only ignores the 'diverse diversities' (Sen, 2006, p.13), which refers to the multiple identities within an individual, but also gives a sense of 'coerciveness' (Geertz, 1973, p.259) by categorising people into groups based on certain characteristics such as language, nationality, ethnicity, or race, whereas the later paradigm stresses that identity is not a product but an ongoing and dynamic process across time and space (Hall, 2005; Hermans, 2001; Sen, 2007).

Regarding one's identity construction in social contexts, Hermans (2001) draws on the concepts from two philosophers—Bakhtin's (1973) concept of polyphony and multifacetedness and James' (1890) notion of the continuity, distinctness and volition of self—to further establish the concept of 'dialogical self'. According to Hermans (2001), the individual's construction of the self—which he coined as the dialogical self—occurs in intercultural encounters where new meanings and practices are presented. The dialogical self is the 'dynamic multiplicity of *I*-positions in the landscape of the mind, intertwined as this mind is with the minds of other people' (Hermans, 2002, p.147) and these positions are constantly shifting in response to changes in space and time (Hermans, 2001; 2011). Since the dynamic movement between *I*-positions involves

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constant negotiation, conflict, and privileging (Bhatia & Ram, 2001), it can further lead to the construction of contradictory identities (Risager & Dervin, 2014). Such contradictory selves can be related to the concept of ascription and avowal of identity proposed by Oetzel (2009). Whilst ascription means 'the process of assigning in another person what you think his or her identity should be,' avowal is 'the process of telling others what identity(ies) you wish to present or how you see yourself' (Oetzel, 2009, p.62). The ascribed identity, therefore, is an identity given by others in specific contexts, and the avowed identity is what one invests in and desires to be recognised in that situation. During IC, the identity an individual is ascribed to by others can be based on one's nationality, ethnicity, language, accent, profession, etc. However, the avowed identity an individual prefers to be seen by others can be relatively complex depending on the context and the purpose one wants to achieve.

Regarding athletes who further their careers away from their home community, such contradiction can be salient. In the empirical study of Schinke and McGannon (2014), the expatriate athlete frustrated about changing her training attitudes to fit in Canada experiences the contradictions in her athlete identity between being a disciplined player who trains herself at high standards or being a relaxed player who trains less hard like other teammates. The struggle of the oppositional voices on one's identity is described as the 'push-and-pull' (Bhatia & Ram, 2001, p.305) phenomenon which is commonly seen amongst immigrants. On the other hand, sometimes the relationship between athletes' avowed and ascribed identity can be less contradictory. For instance, Gentile (2023) reports how Spanish-speaking baseball players competing in America are eager to speak English to connect with the team. By choosing to speak English instead of Spanish, the players shift their avowed identity to an English speaker, which aligns with the ascribed identity imposed by the team who hopes the players can communicate in English to fit in. The shift of

language identity presented here resonates with what Kramsch (2006) and Risager (2006) advocate, the construction of identity amongst multilingual speakers through linguistic practice (e.g., the choice of language or word) is always practical, social, political, and cultural. For example, a language can be chosen based on its practical and social purpose to ensure more people understand and can mingle together. Whether the choice of language is practical, social, political, or cultural oriented, one is automatically included and excluded from a social group once a language is chosen (Kramsch, 2006; Risager, 2006; Risager & Dervin, 2014).

Synthesize the above literature, 'doing identity' in IC is about becoming rather than being. Thus, when discussing identity, the starting point should shift from 'where we came from' to the dynamics between 'how we have been represented and how that bears on how we represent ourselves' (Hall & Du Gay, 1996, p.4).

2.1.5 Reconceptualisation of intercultural communication education (ICE)

Like IC, the notion of ICE is broadly conceptualised in an essentialist view and non-essentialist view. One representative model grounded in the essentialist view is Byram's (1997) famous ICC model, which details the necessary tools to communicate interculturally, such as gaining cultural knowledge, adopting a respectful and tolerant attitude, developing skills in interpreting and discovering as well as a general linguistic, discourse and socio-cultural competence. Another essentialist conceptualisation of ICE is derived from Hofstede's (1980) model of national cultures, which according to Virkama's (2010) personal experience, is adopted by the educator to help learners develop generalised images of societies to make sense of the intercultural interactions with others. From the above cases, it can be summarised that the essentialised ICE tends to provide a formula for people to achieve successful IC; that is, creating harmonious and agreeable conversations.

Whilst conflict-excluded communication may be achieved with such conceptualisation of ICE, Hoff (2014) problematised the essentialist view for ignoring the dynamic interplay between self and other. For Hoff (2014), Byram's ICC model downplays the value of conflict and disagreement, which is as important as sharing respect with others because meaning-making is always negotiated between interlocutors. In a similar vein, Dervin (2016) criticises the Western-centric nature of the above ICE model as it promotes a singular way of IC between people with different backgrounds. Despite the critique on the essentialised ICE, Dervin (2016) acknowledges the role essentialism plays in IC (see Section 2.1.3) and proposes the liquid realistic approach to intercultural competence where individuals are constantly shifting on the continuum with the essentialist and the non-essentialist stance placed on two sides.

According to Dervin (2016), what should be noted about this approach is that no matter how dynamically an individual is co-constructing and negotiating identity with others in different contexts, one will inevitably shift to adopt a simple way to make sense of the situations, such as generalising interlocutors into fixed categories or stereotyping others in IC. This simplified, essentialist orientation is conceptualised by Dervin (2016) as 'the simplexity' whilst the non-essentialist orientation is conceptualised as 'the complexity'. The combination of the word 'simple' and 'complexity', simplexity, is 'a continuum between the simple and the complex' faced by everyone (Dervin, 2016, p.81), implying a way for people to 'navigate between simple and complex ideas and opinions when we interact with others' (p.81) and to constantly adapt 'our discourses to specific situations and interlocutors' (p.81).

To address this navigating nature of intercultural competence, recent IC studies in education engage with Bakhtin's (1981) dialogical approach in reconceptualising ICE. For instance, Ferri (2018) engages with Bakhtin's idea of seeing the development of language as 'the

uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification' (Bakhtin, 1981, p.272) to reconceptualise the pedagogy of IC as a process of interrogating the context and the interaction of those involved. Simpson (2022) also adopts Bakhtin's notion of outsideness, which refers to one's utterance being 'located outside the "soul" of the speaker and does not belong only to him' (Bakhtin, 1987, p.121), to reconfigure ICE as co-constructing truth through engaging with others. In summary, the above scholars reconceptualise ICE as a process of co-creating discourses with others, echoing the Janusian approach proposed by Dervin (2011), which focuses not only on the interplay between self and others but also the engagement of different selves as he perceives individuals' prior experiences of co-constructing interculturality with others as a key factor to shape how they co-construct interculturality with the interlocutors they are interacting with at this moment. All the above suggests that intercultural competence is a cycle of interacting and interpreting amongst a collective of individuals. Because of the collective nature of intercultural competence, no one can take full responsibility for the 'so-called' success or failure of intercultural interactions (Dervin, 2016). Such interpretation of IC is also applied in this research.

Finally, it is worth noting that although my study explores participant's intercultural experiences in the workplace settings, the concept of intercultural communication training (ICT), which is the IC training theory for the adaptation of expatriate workers in corporations (Kupka & Kennan, 2003), is not discussed in this research because this study aims to explore directions for developing ICE development targeting student-athletes, not for the on-site training in professional contexts.

2.2 IC amongst professional athletes playing abroad

Although IC has been widely studied in education and business contexts, to my knowledge, no previous study has been published on the research in the professional sporting context. Most

research regarding the communication strategies amongst high-performance sports expatriates is studied from the acculturation perspective, such as adjusting to new cultural norms (Hirose & Meijen, 2022), adapting to the new style of play to construct athlete identity (Meisterjahn & Wrisberg, 2013), learning new languages to bond with the host community (Gentile, 2023). Despite the concept of acculturation being rooted in intercultural contact where people from different backgrounds engage with each other (Ward & Geeraert, 2016), when this concept is employed in studying professional sporting context, it seems to only highlight how an individual fits into the dominant local context and downplay the dynamic interaction between individuals (Kontos, 2009; Schinke et al., 2009). As is mentioned in Section 1.1, such conceptualisation of culture—treating individuals in the local context as a homogenous group sharing the same culture—reflects the notion of essentialism. This essentialist view of culture also reflects the prevalent assumption that people who speak the same language share common cultural norms, which may lead to the misconception of equating bilingual or multilingual abilities with intercultural communicative skills (Sewell, 2013).

Whilst the essentialist conceptualisation of culture and language dominates the athlete acculturation studies, the non-essentialist view seems to be utilized to study an athlete's identity. For example, Meisterjahn & Wrisberg (2013) reaffirm identity construction through social interactions amongst American basketball players competing overseas, pointing out that the intricate interplay between one's athletic identity can be associated with one's work ethic (Schinke & McGannon, 2014). This view echoes Ryba and Wright's (2005) definition of an athlete's identity, which is always in the process of becoming as it consists of 'a series of complimentary and contradictory identifications operating simultaneously, with some coming to the foreground or receding depending on context' (p.204). The conceptualisation of identity formation mentioned

above aligns Bhatia and Ram's (2004) view on the contested and shifting nature of identity in acculturation, which is 'plural, infinite, dynamic permutations' (p.237), rather than using the traditional linear model of identity formation (Berry, 1997). Compared to the essentialist view of culture and language adopted in the athlete acculturation studies, the non-essentialist conceptualisation of identity seems to offer contextual understandings of athlete's experiences abroad.

However, when it comes to seeking better support for athlete's acculturation process, most of the empirical research projects have the tendency to generalise the challenges faced by those competing away from home instead of exploring the social and contextual factors affecting each individual. For example, Gentile (2023) concludes that English proficiency is essential to the success of professional baseball life through interviews with Latino Baseball players. In Agergaard and Ryba (2014) research on the acculturation experiences amongst professional transnational players, the challenge of cultural differences regarding languages, the style of plays, and cultural practices, is generalised as the key issue for athletes playing abroad to adapt to. In another study where autobiographies of professional expatriate footballers competing in the English Premier League were used as research material, Lally et al. (2022) describe the English language as a common struggle shared by players, highlighting how the lack of language proficiency may impact their performance. Finally, in a similar vein to the above findings, in Van Bakel and Salzbrenner's (2019) quantitative research on identifying the sources of support for professional athletes playing abroad, the survey with 77 participants shows that language skills (57.1%) and cultural differences (41.6%) are two challenges that require support.

Together, these studies ignore the stories behind the athletes' discourse and thoughts, but

generalise the complex context of athletes' experiences abroad by categorising challenges into themes, attempting to provide recommendations on how problems in those themes can be addressed in advance.

2.3 Summary, research purpose, and questions

The review of the literature indicates that what has been predominantly researched in terms of intercultural experiences is mostly through a solid approach and is within education or business contexts. Even though some have been researched through a liquid approach in recent years, intercultural discourses in the context of the sporting world have not yet been investigated. Moreover, the existing papers on athletes' intercultural competence focus on how to create a formula to prepare student-athletes to communicate interculturally in an increasingly mobile world, yet they ignore the complexities in athletes' interactions with different interlocutors under different situations. In addition, previous studies regarding athletes' experiences of playing abroad have covered how they adapt themselves to the host country or community, focusing on what athletes say they have experienced. In such cases, not much has been explored that can contribute to the further understanding of the unspoken agenda and hidden ideology behind the surface of professional athletes' discourse and behaviour in those intercultural encounters, thereby leaving a research gap. Seeking to narrow the gap between the existing bodies of literature about IC, ICE and acculturation for migrant athletes, this research empirically investigated Taiwanese professional athletes' identity navigation in relation to their communication whilst playing abroad. Consequently, two research questions were raised:

1) How do professional Taiwanese athletes make sense of their intercultural experiences when playing in sports clubs abroad?

2) How do they navigate their languages, cultures, and identities when communicating with teammates and coaches?

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Research approach

Given the nature of research questions which seek insight into participants' perceptions of their experiences playing abroad, a constructivist worldview was chosen to guide this study. Since constructivism emphasises the ontological stance of multiple realities constructed by individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018) as well as the epistemological stance of knowledge negotiation and social co-construction instead of knowledge discovery (Gray, 2017), it is the suitable paradigm for my research which focuses on discussing the interplay of individual athletes and social others. Consistent with my philosophical worldview, a phenomenological research design is the most appropriate design because rather than seeking to make generalisations to the larger population, it is concerned with 'contextual description and analysis' (Gray, 2017, p.31) and enables the exploration into the lived experiences of the research participant and how they make sense of those experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Besides amplifying individual narrative voices, this research resorted to Bakhtin's (1981) dialogism perspective which views all the contributing voices in the dialogue as equally important to the achievement of 'actual meaning' (p.281), thus allowing delving into the discourse of this study to uncover 'the "unsaid" of the co-construction of discourses' (Simpson et al., 2022, p.2042). To be more specific, dialogically engaging with others and being consciously aware of 'who speaks and under what condition he speaks' (Bakhtin, 1981, p.401) helps deepen our understanding of the world. Therefore, in this study, both the research and participants engaged as active agents, co-creating knowledge as well as making sense of the world together through the interview. Judging from the explanation above, it is clear that a qualitative research approach was employed in this study to acquire a deeper understanding of how elite Taiwanese athletes adopt communicative strategies and construct their identities whilst

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playing for a foreign sports club outside of Taiwan. In the following sections, I will introduce the sampling technique and the research methods in more detail.

3.2 Participants

As stated by Merriam & Tisdell (2015), qualitative research is not seeking generalisability but rather gaining insight from the unique experience of the sample. Therefore, the purposeful sampling strategy was employed in this research to obtain in-depth understandings as well as interpretations of unique experiences from the potential 'information rich cases' (Patton, 2015, p.53). Consequently, participants were selected using the following criteria: (a) all participants are either native Mandarin Chinese or Taiwanese dialect speakers, (b) all participants are athletes who spent their student life in Taiwan, (c) all participants were required to have the experience of playing for at least one professional team sports club abroad. The recruitment proceeded on the basis that these participants took the leap to play abroad, using non-native languages to communicate with people within and outside the club, and thus offered a glimpse into the unique intercultural experience amongst elite Taiwanese team sport players. The research invitation was sent to several potential participants via direct message on social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. Professional athletes (n=4, 2 female, 2 male) aged over 20 and met the aforementioned criteria agreed to participate in the interview and provided e-signature informed consent. Their professional experience playing abroad varied from 2 to 3 years of experience working overseas as of June 2023. Combined together, they have competed in five countries located across three continents (Asia, Europe, Americas). The sport the participants compete in, however, remains undisclosed in this study. Given the relatively small number of Taiwanese athletes who have pursued foreign careers so far, listing the sport is likely to reveal the participant's

identity. Table 1 provides pseudonyms of the participants with brief backgrounds of their athletic careers to protect anonymity whilst still providing contextual information.

Table 1. Description of participants and data generated

Pseudonym	Gender	Mother Tongue	Number of professional clubs they have played abroad (as of Jun 2023)	Region of the club	Interview date	Number of key moments presented as excerpts
A	M	Mandarin Chinese	2	Europe	May 18, 2023	3
B	M	Mandarin Chinese	2	Europe	May 22, 2023	3
C	F	Mandarin Chinese	2	Americas; Europe	May 25, 2023	2
D	F	Mandarin Chinese	2	Asia	June 4, 2023	1

3.3 Data collection

The interview was chosen as the data collection technique because it probes deep into an individual's worldview, especially the 'underlying causes of behaviour' (King et al., 2018, p.53), and further helps the researcher 'make sense of the diversity of human experience' (Patton, 2015, p.426). Since this research focuses on the meanings and interpretations participants gave to their interactions with the team, conducting interviews is helpful. Between May and June 2023 (Table 1), four semi-structured one-on-one online interviews were conducted on the Microsoft Teams platform using Mandarin Chinese, the language used by the participants and me, each ranging from one to two hours. As noted by Kvale and Brinkmann (2018), the semi-structured type of interview requires the researchers to use interview guidelines flexibly and thus allows a conversational style of dialogue. Maintaining such conversational flow in the data collection of this research enables the exploration of how participants interpret their experiences (King et al., 2018). Although such conversational flow in the interview can lead to less systematic data collection (Patton, 2015), the questions and the follow-up dialogues emerging from the interview context allow me to gain personal, contextualised data from participants in their 'natural language' (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p.187). With the respondents' permission, all interviews were recorded using the software OBS,

and were subsequently transcribed verbatim in Chinese and where relevant translated into English by me. The translated transcription was sent to participants for member checking.

3.4 Data analysis

There are two stages of data analysis in this study, including Sullivan's (2011) key moment approach and the discourse analysis placing Bakhtin's concept of dialogism in the centre. Starting from reducing the data set size and extracting relevant data, I resorted to Sullivan's (2011) approach to iteratively re-read the interview to identify key moments most relevant to the RQs. The reason I chose it as the preliminary data engagement is that the concept of key moments, which identifies utterance as the basic unit of communication and emphasises whether utterance carries additional meanings, is in line with the dialogical epistemology (Sullivan, 2011). I initially identified around 4 to 5 key moments from each respondent. For instance, I identified the participant's reflections on the similarities and differences shared between their teammates and themselves. Yet, following the discussion with my supervisor, I excluded key moments that are less relevant to RQs. Ultimately, each participants contribute 1 to 3 key moments in this research (Table 1), which are anecdotes that are 'intertwined with a personal reflection' (Sullivan, 2011, p.73).

The second stage of data analysis was conducted through a specific form of discourse analysis based on Bakhtin's (1981, 1984) concept of dialogism, to explore the multi-voices in discourse. Dialogism, according to Bakhtin (1981, 1984), refers to the dialogical nature of being. Bakhtin (1984) argues that 'a person exists in the forms I and other' (p. 293), suggesting that the negotiation of the self is always open and unfinished. From this perspective, the being of the self (e.g., one's utterance, identity, thoughts), whether aware or not, is always shaped in the dialogue with others. The negotiation of self and others also takes us to Bakhtin's (1984) concept of

multivoicedness or polyphony, which is the construction of multiple voices embedded in one's discourse, as the voice is 'never singular or unitary, but reflects the connection of individuals to realities that are sometimes multiple and often contradictory. The voice or voices of individuals frequently reveal much about the conditions and relations that position and surround them.' Walsh (1991, p. 4). The concept of polyphony, the construction of different meanings in different contexts, is a crucial idea in dialogism underpinning the dialogical approach, as one of its essential components is that 'language is fundamentally polysemic and that its meaning is not predetermined by the linguistic code but constructed within a certain discursive situation' (Grossen, 2010, p. 7). Different voices within the utterance, according to Roulet (2011), can be identified by irony, negation, discourse markers such as 'but', and presupposition. Besides the polyphonic elements, the contradictions and subtle changes in the utterance can also be identified through three main enunciation elements, which are stated by Dervin (2016) as deictics (e.g., personal pronouns, adverbs, verbs), utterance modalities (e.g., adverbs, shifters), and nouns (e.g., a specific noun that may reveal speaker's attitude). As my research aims to explore not 'what' but 'how' the participants construct identities, communications, and meanings in their own context, following the dialogical informed analysis helps me go beyond the utterance's literal meaning and uncover the possible factors contributing to the discursive utterance. This method also allowed me to further identify three analytical components which form the basis of the results and discussion chapter.

3.5 Researcher reflexivity

Reflexivity is the ability of the researcher to 'self-consciously refer to him or herself in relation to the production of knowledge about research topics' (Roulston, 2010, p. 116). In intercultural research, exercising reflexivity is especially crucial for the researcher to acknowledge that the discourse and the identities emerging within the interview are co-constructed between the

researcher and the researched (Dervin, 2013). Thus, I am aware that the questions I asked my participants, my reaction to their thoughts, and even my positioning as a researcher who used to work in the sports industry all might influence their expression of experience. At some points during the interview, I might sympathise with the athletes and judge their teammates and coaches simple-mindedly. This also means that the topics covered in each interview varied slightly, depending on how the conversation proceeded. For example, the experience regarding national identity, a relatively sensitive topic given Taiwan's political history with China, was not discussed in all interviews either because of its irrelevance to the participant's experience or because of other factors that prevented them from talking about it. Since the interview data is treated as co-constructed accounts, I do not conceptualise my interviewees as 'repositories of knowledge—treasuries of information awaiting excavation—as they are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003, p. 68).

3.6 Ethics

Necessary ethical considerations were made throughout this study guided by the British Educational Research Association (2018). Firstly, upon receiving ethics approval from the research supervisor, a bilingual information sheet (see appendix), as well as a consent form (see appendix), were sent to the participants via social media platforms. This procedure was performed to provide sufficient information on the research for the participants to decide on participation prior to data collection (Whitley & Kite, 2012). Each interview began with a reminder of the participant's right to withdraw from the study at any phase. Although participants received a small gift after the interview, they had no knowledge of this until the interview had been completed. This suggests that the given gift is an appreciation for their time instead of a form of compensation (Cohen et al., 2000), thus nullifying any impact on the data collection process. Regarding the protection of

individual privacy and confidentiality of data, pseudonyms were given to all interviewees (see Table 1) in the transcript as well as filing and the identifiable features (e.g., the location of clubs) in the transcript were redacted to maintain their anonymity and privacy. The strategy employed was to make participants untraceable to all readers (Cohen et al, 2000) whilst guaranteeing the 'researcher's freedom to investigate social issues' (Kimmel, 1988, p.85). All data will be deleted within a minimum period of 9 months to a maximum period of 5 years due to the possibility of publication in academic journals.

3.7 Trustworthiness

Proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), the concept of trustworthiness is most used to evaluate the worth of qualitative research. Some strategies employed in my study are effective in establishing credibility, such as member checking (Creswell, 2020) where I shared the interview transcripts with participants and received their feedback and the engagement of the researcher's reflexivity as I explicitly present my 'reflexive self' (Yin, 2016, p.285) throughout the research to show how I influenced the data collection and analysis process when co-constructing the interview with participants. However, the issue of trustworthiness is not necessarily relevant to my research because the nature of the IC study is not about seeking truth, but to 'allow the potential multiplicity of meanings and positions attached to interculturality to emerge.' (Simpson et al., 2020, p. 2047). This means that, instead of taking participants' utterances as gospel, I dig deeper into participants' multi-dimensional discourse co-constructed with others in the specific intercultural contexts and include my influence as a researcher during the study (Dervin, 2011). Additionally, the findings will not be further reviewed by participants because, as stated by Simpson et al. (2020), 'the truth' cannot be confirmed through a single lens. It is worth noting that this research does not aim to generalise the experience of Taiwanese athletes who have furthered their careers outside of Taiwan

but to leverage their unique experience to offer practical insights regarding how they navigate

through identity and communication as expatriate athletes competing abroad.

Chapter 4. Results and Discussion

The results are presented in three parts, each of which includes an analysis of interview excerpts and is followed by a discussion of excerpts. Exploring how elite athletes make sense of their intercultural experience abroad allows us to elucidate how and why they are constantly repositioning themselves regarding culture, identity, and language. It is worth noting that how I, the interviewer of this research, co-construct the interviews with participants is also examined in the analytical section because the interviewer has a potential influence on how the participants respond to questions (Risager & Dervin, 2014).

4.1 Juggling between the solid and liquid conceptualization of culture

The first element that I noticed is participants' oscillations between the essentialist and non-essentialist discourse, which can be seen as examples of using the Janusian approach to shift between discourses that are more solid (e.g., essentialism, culturalism) and liquid (e.g., on-going constructions of meanings) (Dervin 2011). I begin with B's account of his communication strategy when he first arrived at the foreign club and how his perception of communicating with others developed over time:

Excerpt 1

1. **Interviewer:** I am curious about the way you interact with people from different countries, cultures and how you adjust yourself in those interactions when you are playing abroad.

2. **B:** In terms of the use of language, I have no clue what's coming when I first went abroad. I tried to talk to others and gradually got to know this person through conversations. At first, I was still quite scared. I couldn't come up with topics and I was unsure whether I would offend them.

3. **Interviewer:** So you have a general idea of how to interact with others?

4. **B:** Yes, sometimes I keep this (being careful about what to bring up in the conversation) in mind while chatting with them, especially when interacting with players from different countries, and even players from the same country. I think there should be a slight difference in the conversations with different people because everyone has different backgrounds even if they are from the same country.

(Excerpt from interview with B, 22nd May 2023)

In line 2, B's concern about unconsciously offending interlocutors shows a hint of essentialism as he implies that the way people communicate is based on their culture, language, and national backgrounds. However, it is worth noting that B's solid perception here may be induced by me as this dialogue starts from a question (line 1) that specifies 'culture', a term that has an essentialist orientation (Risager & Dervin, 2014). Despite the essentialist hint in that question, B moves on to share a revelation (line 4) opposite from the original stance that has come to him after playing abroad for a while: the pre-determined conversation topics or the overall direction may not always work on people who are from the same country because they are unique in their own way. B's liquid, non-essentialist stance focusing on the interactions between individuals instead of cultures echoes Baumann's (1996) idea that 'culture is not a real thing but an abstract and purely analytical notion. It does not cause behaviour, but summarizes an abstraction from it, and is thus neither normative nor predictive' (p. 11). B's repositioning in the continuum of essentialist and non-essentialist regarding the conversation he had with others may signify his awareness of 'the diverse diversities' (Dervin, 2009), yet it does not mean B is not fixed at one side of the continuum. The next excerpt illustrates how B, in the same interview, shifted back to a 'solid' stance, generalising

people based on their nationality when commenting on particular traits shared by people within the same country:

Excerpt 2

1. **B:** Generally speaking, the Spaniards are lazy.

2. **Interviewer:** How do you come to this conclusion?

3. **B:** The Italians do things in an orderly manner.

4. **Interviewer:** Is this what you observed when playing abroad?

5. **B:** You just know it as long as you live there. Italians are more like the planning type and they follow the plan.

(Excerpt from interview with B, 22nd May 2023)

In line 1 and 3, solid representations of people in two countries are addressed in B's discourse, with a particular reference to the shared norms embodied by the Spaniards as being 'lazy' and by the Italians as doing things 'orderly'. B's nationality-based categorisation regarding the lifestyle he experienced in two countries seems to contradict what he implies earlier in the interview (see excerpt 1); that is, people are different despite coming from the same country. However, this contradiction in fact resonates with the Janusian approach proposed by Dervin (2011, 2016), which focuses on how people juggle between the solid and liquid representations of culture based on different contexts.

Some participants make sense of their interaction with the team by comparing it with previous sporting experiences in their home country. As such, C reports how she communicates with the coach by referring to the difference in styles between Westerners and Asians:

Excerpt 3

1. **Interviewer:** When playing abroad, did you know well how to communicate with the coach from the beginning or did you grow into that?

2. **C:** It depends. I start by observing the personality of the coach, such as his/her style of coaching. Usually, I observe how players respond to them and the way players talk to them. The way players communicate with the coach is very straightforward. It's like the coach and players are equal in the relationship. They don't view coaches as a higher power.

3. **Interviewer:** Seems like your strategy is observing others' interaction and then you will treat people in the way they want to be treated.

4. **C:** Yes, I think so. When seeing the way one interacts with others, you will know 'Oh, this is what I should do'. Obviously, foreigners are pretty straightforward. This is their culture. But it doesn't work the same in Asia. If we communicate with our coaches in this way, they'll say, 'What the heck are you doing?' and say you have no manners.

(Excerpt from interview with C, 25th May 2023)

In line 2, C presents herself as an 'observant communicator' when playing abroad by viewing people's behaviours as an open-ended process suggesting her critical and liquid stance towards culture. However, C's non-essentialist orientation seems to be only applied in the Western world, as she solidifies culture by referring to a typical, indirect coach-player communication style in Asia in line 4. C's juggling between the liquid (coach-player communication is unsettled and negotiable in the Western world) and solid (coach-player communication style is static and essentialised) illustrates another example of Janusian discourse (Dervin, 2011, 2016). Moreover, underlying C's utterance here is a clear Othering between Westerner coaches, who are described as people who use the straightforward communication style, and Asian coaches, who are described as those who

expect to be respected by players and prefer a more indirect and implicit communication style. What contributes to the Othering, engaging with others by using stereotypes and representations (Dervin, 2016), could be due to C's familiarity with the Confucian value, a prevailing philosophy in the Asia regions which requires juniors (less experienced) to show respect and obedience to seniors (more experienced), thus forming a hierarchical relationship in communication (Chen & Chung, 1994). This excerpt illustrates that the participant relentlessly navigates her position between the solid and liquid and thus adjusts her communication styles accordingly to different contexts.

Whilst C shares her interaction with the coach, A discusses his struggle after returning from abroad by comparing the interaction styles between the foreign teams he used to play for and the team in Taiwan. The excerpt begins with my question about the cause of his struggle:

Excerpt 4

1. **Interviewer:** Is it because they (A's teammate in Taiwan) don't know the 'new' you who has played abroad for so long, or is it because you don't know how to show the 'foreign side of you' to them?

2. **A:** I think I cannot get along with everyone with 'the foreign side of me' because foreigners are very friendly and outgoing, whereas Taiwanese people drink alcohol and smoke to socialise with others. But I do neither. I am just being myself. But in Taiwan, it's very hard to do that. In Taiwan, if you are being yourself, others will think you are being arrogant.

(Excerpt from interview with A, 18th May 2023)

From A's utterance (line 2), the Janusian discourse can be detected as he swings from dividing all foreigners and Taiwanese into two categories—a more positive, outgoing type and a relatively

negative type associated with drinking and smoking (solid)—to emphasising his uniqueness as an individual who dislikes those harmful behaviours despite being a player from Taiwan (liquid). Although A juggles between two orientations, Othering can be identified from A's discourse as he explicitly situates himself away from other Taiwanese players ('I do neither') to proudly claim his uniqueness ('I am just being myself'), which further leads to the hierarchisation between self and others (Dervin, 2016). The hierarchisation here echoes Bauman's (2004) idea of the two poles of identification: one side with the agency to 'compose and decompose their identities more or less at will' (p.38) whilst those at the other side 'are given no say in deciding their preferences and who in the end are burdened with identities enforced and imposed by others' (p.38). Although A attempts to position himself on the side with agency to make choices, from the last sentence of line 2 where the pronoun shifts from 'I' to 'you' and the presupposition shows A's concern about being judged, it appears that A is actually placed on the other side with no freedom to choose. Such suppression silences A and it also indicates there is a mutual hierarchy between A and others, which may be the cause of A's struggle to fit into the team because Othering can 'lead to frustration, ignorance, patronizing attitudes, and disinterest in others' (Dervin, 2016, p. 28).

4.2 A process of becoming: co-constructing identities with others

From some of my participants' descriptions of their interactions with teammates, it can be detected that different aspects of their sense of self are emphasised based on the context. This echoes the concept of identity salience, which Oetzel (2009) refers to as 'the degree to which an identity is prominent or stands out to us in a given situation' (p.59). It also resonates with Bakhtin's (1981) dialogical understanding of utterances, which is the tension between authoritative discourses—whose 'semantic structure is static and dead' (p. 343)—and internally persuasive discourses—whose state is open to negotiation with different perspectives (Wells, 2007). From this perspective,

individuals possess plural and contradictory identities and in given situations, certain aspects of the identity become more prominent. I begin with A's account of being teased as 'chino' and how he responded to similar jokes made to him in different contexts:

Excerpt 5

1. **Interviewer:** So your teammates called you 'chino' during the practice?

2. **A:** Yes. I told them not to joke like that but some just wouldn't stop. So I texted in the WhatsApp group chat, telling everyone that I needed respect. They stopped making the jokes after learning why it's not funny. Yet, few teammates I'm close with still made such jokes. For example, when they spotted Chinese restaurants, they would send me its picture and I would jokingly reply, 'fuck you.' We were obviously just enjoying the banter because he would reply, 'No, no, I love Taiwan,' and I would say, 'ok, I love you, too.'

3. **Interviewer:** You didn't feel insulted because you could tell it's just a playful banter?

4. **A:** Yes. I only do this with those who are close to me.

5. **Interviewer:** Those who know very well you are Taiwanese?

6. **A:** Yes, especially those who are just enjoying the friendly banter.

(Excerpt from interview with A, 18th May 2023)

As A used the utterance 'not funny' and 'I don't like it' to fight against the stereotype his teammates imposed on him by labelling A as 'Chino', a racial slur often used against people who 'look Asian' regardless of their nationality, it can be assumed that there is a mismatch between A's avowed identity as a non-Chinese and the ascribed identity (Chinese) given by his teammates. A's strongly highlighted non-Chinese identity here, however, is not salient in all contexts. Moving on to the second half of line 2, when A's close teammates made a 'Chinese restaurant' joke on him, such

imposed Chinese identity did not seem to aggravate A, as he characterises this joke as a 'friendly banter' (line 6). The enabling factors behind A's polar-opposite reactions to the Chino-related, which is also the formation of A's internally persuasive discourse, may be due to varying reasons. The first is about the text 'I love Taiwan' sent by A's close teammate, which in this context may serve as a catalyst to open up a space for A to discuss his Taiwanese identity, and further imply that A's ascribed identity from this teammate is consistent with A's sense of self as Taiwanese. Another reason may be related to A's justification of viewing the potentially offensive joke as 'banter', a way of rationalising and neutralising the racialised discourse to avoid being prejudiced. Excerpt 5 illustrates how people's voices are always 'half ours and half someone else's' (Bakhtin, 1981, p.345) and the multiple identities within an individual which are constructed and shifting depending on the context. The fluid nature of identity constructed depending on the context also illustrates the importance of not simply focusing on how expatriate athletes picture themselves in a particular situation but exploring how they construct their identities. After all, as is stated by Holliday et al. (2004), 'what people say about their cultural identity should be read as the image they wish to project at a particular time rather than as evidence of an essentialist national culture'.

The prevalent Chinese stereotype of Taiwanese is also mentioned in the next excerpt. It is worth noting that throughout the collected data, the Taiwan-China topic is only explicitly mentioned by two interviewees in excerpt 5 and 6. Based on the conversation flow in each interview, the topic of Taiwan and China is only raised or discussed when the participants mentioned the related theme. For example, after C distinguished Taiwanese from Chinese regarding the number of residencies in the city she played for, I then followed up with the question to see if she had ever been mistaken for Chinese when playing abroad:

Excerpt 6

1. **C:** Not many Taiwanese people live in this city. They are mostly Chinese.

2. **Interviewer:** Were your teammates familiar with Taiwan or did they mistake Taiwan for China?

3. **C:** They did misunderstand that Taiwan is the same as China. And I would explain the difference between Taiwan and China. Since Taiwan is a small country, they might have heard of Taiwan yet they would link it with China due to the overwhelming political news. But most of the time they didn't ask much about it.

4. **Interview:** So you only explain it when they misunderstood your nationality?

5. **C:** I would stress that I come from Taiwan, not China, but I think nationality is not something to be stressed when playing abroad.

(Excerpt from interview with C, 25th May 2023)

What deserves attention here is the discourse marker 'but' in line 3 and line 5, which both appear following C's utterance on how she would highlight her avowed identity as a Taiwanese when playing abroad. Since the discourse marker 'but' can serve as a connection between the individual's utterances to show opposite viewpoints or an extension of expression depending on the context (Roulet, 2011), here the discourse marker 'but' in both line 3 and 5 seems to serve a major purpose: shifting the direction of the conversation by introducing a new stance (line 5: 'nationality is not something to be stressed') in contrast to the previous one (line 5: 'I would stress that I come from Taiwan') to downplay the significance of such identity when competing abroad. On one hand, the utterance following the discourse marker may be made because C's teammates were not interested in her avowed identity and thus did not emphasise it. On the other hand, C's potential hesitancy to discuss this topic may be because the identity she wants to highlight in the interview with me is not on national or ethnic identity but more on her professional self. The illustration in excerpt 6,

which demonstrates that the avowed identity may not always be amplified by others, exemplifies what Sen (2006) argues that 'the freedom in choosing our identity in the eyes of others can sometimes be extraordinarily limited' (p. 31). As this excerpt also signifies that the researcher is making meaning and co-constructing identities with the participant, it reflects Bakhtin's (1987) philosophy that 'any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances' (p.69). Thus, critically reflecting on the possible influence the researcher has on the analysis process whilst examining interculturality allows the voice of the participant to be heard (Dervin, 2016).

Returning to the athlete's interaction with the team, the next excerpt shows how B navigated through his choice of name when playing abroad:

Excerpt 7

1. **Interviewer:** So you are called 'X' when playing abroad because it's easier for others to pronounce?

2. **B:** Yes, I think so. I use the name that I acknowledge and is easy for others to call me. Growing up in Taiwan, we were either given or chose English names for ourselves, right? I used to be called Jack, a name given by the cram school. I changed it to Chris later because the drummer in a band I was obsessed with has the same name. But I feel like those names don't represent who I am. I always feel weird when someone calls me that.

3. **Interviewer:** Because you don't feel like it's the real you?

4. **B:** No. That's why I ask people to call me 'X' when I am playing abroad, which is a part of my Chinese name.

(Excerpt from interview with B, 22nd May 2023)

This excerpt begins with my assumption on B's choice of using 'X', a part of his Chinese name which is adjusted at the convenience of non-Chinese speakers. Whilst B confirms this assumption by replying, 'Yes, I think so' (line 2), he details the reason behind his name change, stating that 'I use the name I acknowledge' (line 2) and explaining that the English name he used previously failed to represent who he. Here, the tension between the authoritative discourse (getting an English name is a norm for Taiwanese people) and internal persuasive discourse (line 2: 'I feel like those names don't represent who I am') is salient. As B finally chose 'X', a part of his Chinese name, to be addressed abroad, it illustrates how 'an individual's ideological becoming' (Bakhtin, 1981, p.342) is a process of active engagement with two types of discourses.

Excerpt 7 shows that identity is not solely created in the moment, but a process of ongoing negotiation between past, present, and future. Moreover, as 'X' is still derived from B's Chinese name, it resonates Hermans' (2001) idea that new positions that are created within the self arise by combining existing ones. Although traces of the new positions can be detected, it does not mean what will be created is predictable, as identity is co-created on the act in different contexts. Further considerations are raised. For example, how will B address himself when interacting with a group consisting of both Chinese and non-Chinese speakers? Or how will B address himself in a situation where he has limited agency in constructing identity?

4.3 Mobilising multilingual resources for whom and for what purpose

In this section, I examine the language use of the participants—what multilingual recourses are employed by them—for whom, in what situations, and for what purpose (e.g., achieve effective communication, navigate through conflict). I begin with B's choice of language in swearing when facing conflicts in the training and the match:

Excerpt 8

1. **B:** During practice, there were one or two times that I lashed out at my teammates. I've never done such a thing before.

2. **Interviewer:** What language did you use?

3. **B:** English. Then, there's a time when we were playing against opponents who were trying to intimidate us. I stared at them impatiently and swore in Taiwanese.

4. **Interviewer:** Wow!

5. **B:** Because I was very pissed. This has never happened when I was playing in Taiwan, because I need to maintain manners, and if I did that everyone would know what I'm talking about.

(Excerpt from interview with B, 22ⁿᵈ May 2023)

As B lashed out at his teammates in English (line 1-3), a language well understood by all his teammates and thus can convey both linguistic and emotional messages, it can be inferred that B was calling for a change of behaviours in his teammates who made him frustrated in that conflictual context. However, when facing intimidating opponents during a game, B switched to swearing in Taiwanese instead of English (line 3). Unlike English, swearing in Taiwanese, a language incomprehensible to anyone, can only possibly convey emotional messages. As B expressed his frustration in a more irrational way (because no one understands its meaning), it seems that B's intention of swearing here is to relieve his stress and try to affect opponents emotionally. On the other hand, when B recalls a similar conflictual situation in Taiwan, where he would neither swear nor express any emotions because of the need to 'maintain manners' (line 5), it can be inferred that B's intention of keeping a reserved manner in a Chinese speaking context is to maintain a positive image as a professional player who acts with sportsmanship in front of the team and fans. Excerpt 8 signifies that in different conflictual contexts, the participant employs multilingual resources to

address the situations, and the way language is used in those contexts reflects different aspects of the participant's identity. For example, when B swore in Taiwanese in a non-Taiwanese speaking context, his aggressiveness aspect of player identity seems to be highlighted. This resonates with Risager's (2006) argument that linguistic practice (e.g., the choice of language) contributes to the construction and expression of one's identity. This excerpt also signifies the normality of conflict in the professional sporting context, an aspect of which is often negated by the mainstream frameworks of intercultural education whose goal is to avoid causing conflicts (Phipps, 2014).

The nature of linguistic practice serving as a means to express identity is also reflected in other participants' utterances. D, who has a good command of English, shares how she communicated with a Japanese teammate who also served as an international player in the club but was struggling with English:

Excerpt 9

1. **Interviewer:** So how did you talk to her if her English skills are limited?

2. **D:** We used Google Translate. I typed what I wanted to say and translated it into Japanese and vice versa. Sometimes, I would ask her how to say words in Japanese. Our conversation then became a mixture of English and Japanese. For example, when she didn't know how to say 'difficult' in English, I would use Google Translate to show her its meaning in Japanese. As I grew familiar with this term in Japanese, when I talked to her about something 'difficult', I just said the term in Japanese, not in English.

(Excerpt from interview with D, 4ᵗʰ Jun 2023)

From this narrative, D's intention to 'be included' and to 'include' the interlocutor in the conversation can be identified from how she tried to promote communication by proactively learning Japanese (first half of line 2: 'I would ask her how to say words in Japanese'). It is clear

that Japanese has become part of D's language repertoire as she not only memorised the Japanese word that was frequently used but also used it in their conversation (second half of line 2). Excerpt 9 shows that the participant uses multilingual repertories to create an atmosphere of understanding and a sense of belonging for the teammate. This echoes Kramsch's (2006) idea that the way one uses language to socially construct meaning with the interlocutor can create an inclusive atmosphere for self and others.

The following excerpt further illustrates the need to put effort into communication even with people speaking the same language, as A narrates how he communicated game tactics with the coach and the similarity between the communication strategy when playing for local and foreign teams:

Excerpt 10

1. **Interviewer:** The coaches use the board to discuss tactics during the game?

2. **A:** Yes, if the tactic is designed for me, they explain it to me in English. Normally, I can tell what to do by looking at the coach's drawing on the board.

3. **Interviewer:** Seems like you have no problem handling the tactics?

4. **A:** No.

5. **Interviewer:** What about the communication on techniques?

6. **A:** Upon joining a new team, there are always some issues on how to work with others, but this will be improved over time through training. For example, even when I play in Taiwan with those I've never worked with, I still need to figure out how to work with them.

(Excerpt from interview with A, 18th May 2023)

In line 2, A points out that when discussing tactics, the coaches would accommodate his need to speak in English and A could also grasp the idea of the tactic by looking at the drawing on the board— a visual image, which is part of the discourse just like language (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). One may conclude that it is the way A used his linguistic and semiotic repertoires that results in smooth and effective communication with the coaching staff. Yet, it is more than that, as A moves on to talk about how speaking the same language is not equivalent to swift communication, not to mention a successful one, by saying, 'even when I am playing in Taiwan with players I've never worked with, I also need some time to know how to work with them' (line 6). A's reflection here implies that miscommunication can also occur on a team where people all speak the same language. This exemplifies what Piller (2011) argues that 'misunderstandings arise not only because of linguistic or cultural differences but also because people fight and argue' (p.155). Certainly, if A did not agree with the instructions given by the coaches, using the same language or knowing the tactic drawing would not be a contributing factor in the so-called successful communication. It can be assumed that the premise of productive communication is whether the interactants 'actually want to understand each other' (Piller, 2011, p.155).

4.4 Summary

To summarise this chapter, the findings reveal three themes relating to how Taiwanese sports expatriates make sense of their intercultural experiences competing abroad. Firstly, the Janusian approach (Dervin, 2011) underpins the interaction between expatriate athlete's self and others across time and space. When interacting with interlocutors with whom they are less familiar, my participants tend to adopt a more nuanced understanding of contextual factors influencing others' behaviours and characteristics, yet when in a more familiar context, they are likely to classify people into different categories based on overly simplified assumptions.

Secondly, the findings suggest that the identity of expatriate athletes is not static but emergent, constructing with interlocutors in different contexts for different purposes. However, it also signifies that expatriate athletes do not always have the agency to choose how they want to be identified. It is in such tension that they navigate between the unitary and multiple voices and carry out their meaning-making process, echoing Bakhtin's (1981, p.346) argument that 'our ideological development is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values'.

Thirdly, my participants do not always interact with others for a sole and fixed purpose like exchanging messages, but sometimes it is related to contextual purposes such as relieving stress. Furthermore, the findings illustrate that using the same language does not always result in successful communication and that misunderstandings may occur when people interpret situations differently or when they do not share common interests.

Together these themes reflect Bakhtin's (1981) belief that utterances are never neutral as they are mutually constructed across times and through a process of being heard and responded to. As such the IC between expatriate athletes and their team as well as the player's joint reflection with the interviewer on their experience competing abroad are always open to negotiation and contradiction.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary and reflection

As mentioned earlier, the experience of sports players playing at the professional level abroad is understudied with regard to how they acculturate in a new environment using different languages to adapt to new social norms. Rather than discussing how and why they describe what they experience in the foreign sports clubs, research tends to promote monologic discourse, which 'pretends to be the ultimate word' (Bakhtin, 1984, p.293), as they usually take the discourse of participants as evidence to explain the common challenges in their acculturation process. My study fills this gap by adopting Bakhtin's dialogism and Dervin's (2011) liquid approach to examine expatriate athletes' discourse, focusing on their shifting perceptions of culture between the continuum of essentialism and non-essentialism as well as their varied identities and communication styles in their description of their foreign career. Based on the qualitative study of the intercultural experience amongst Taiwanese professional athletes who pursue a career in foreign countries, this paper found that athletes' identities and their communication styles are never finalised because they are competing in the professional sporting context where interaction is dynamic and co-constructed according to specific interlocutors and contexts. Rather, they keep on negotiating meanings and moving between contradictory selves for different purposes. This also illustrates the dialogical nature of IC, where the interlocutors' utterances 'can never be identical' (Bakhtin, 1987, p.108) as they are always in development and changing depending on the contextual factors. For expatriate athletes, it is through this dialogic process of shifting between the dominant and alternative discourses that the individuals develop their ideological becoming and grow their understanding of the world (Freedman & Ball, 2004).

In terms of the surprising findings of this research, I found that whilst the expatriate athletes

actively express their sense of self to stay oriented in the foreign land regardless of confrontation, they still avoid making situations out of control and attempt to achieve a certain degree of harmony in the interaction they engage in the sporting context by broadening their identities as an athlete and ethnic/language minority on the team. Such a tendency may be because of the many high-stakes moments involved in their professional career as the individual performance and the chemistry with the team in each game and practice all influence the contract they could get for the next season.

Evidently, with the small sample size of this study, my arguments could not be generalised to all high-performance Taiwanese sports expatriates. On the other hand, this study offers a unique glimpse into how Taiwanese professional athletes playing abroad navigate their identities and communication practices to find their footing on the new ground.

5.2 Implications

The findings of this study provide theoretical and contextual implications for the field of IC. In terms of the theoretical aspect, this study exemplifies the dialogical nature of IC, which is derived from Bakhtinian notion that one's ideological becoming is the ongoing negotiation of assimilating others' words into the self (Bakhtin, 1981). From this perspective, the concept of IC is understood as shaped by the dynamic relationship with others and the context they are in, rather than simply categorising people and making assumptions based on their race, ethnicity, gender, and nation, such as using culture as an excuse to explain one's behaviour (Ferri, 2014). It also emphasises the idea that IC is emergent and situational as the interlocutors all bring their unique experiences, backgrounds, and intentions into the interactions (Kecskes, 2014). In short, Bakhtin's dialogism informs a new way of discussing IC by focusing on one's changing positions in the dialogue depending on the interlocutor and the social situation.

Regarding the contextual implication, this study has highlighted possible directions for ICE in Taiwan targeting student-athletes. As mentioned above, the findings of the study suggest the dialogical nature of IC and that professional athletes who are competing abroad are always contextually negotiating meanings with self and others in the dynamic intercultural encounters. Hence, student-athletes need to play an active role in IC to reflect on the discourses created due to the dynamic interplay between themselves and others (Shi-Xu, 2001). It is also recommended that those teaching IC courses should not rely on prevalent stereotypes to teach culture as if keeping such stereotypes could help achieve effective communication and avoid conflict but pay more attention to the intercultural dynamics between self and others. Based on this view, those who design IC curriculum for student-athletes in Taiwan are advised to integrate the concept of how individuals shape their identity, perspectives, and communication styles according to the context and interlocutors into the IC teaching material as this concept can serve as a critical approach to help students critically negotiate meanings of self and others based on different contexts (Dervin, 2016).

Secondly, the findings of the study illustrate that miscommunication and conflict can arise amongst athletes who speak the same language(s) simply due to disagreement on certain issues. Therefore, teachers responsible for IC targeting student-athletes should be expected to develop the awareness that language is not the panacea for a mutual understanding between people; rather, they should pay attention to learners' rationale behind their discourse on certain issues. As for the IC curriculum designer, they should be advised to move away from creating the illusion of a non-conflict world in IC but embrace miscommunication and conflict in the IC pedagogy as they are inevitable and unavoidable elements of intercultural interactions (Simpson & Dasli, 2023). From this perspective, the aim of ICE is not merely achieving 'shared cultural expressions through

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dialogue and mutual respect' (UNESCO, 2005, p.5) but to embrace the fact that conflict is the norm in the dynamics of IC since a so-called successful IC (i.e., reaching agreement) or unsuccessful IC (i.e., causing misunderstanding) is always created collectively rather than individually (Shi-Xu, 2001). Hence, student-athletes should be trained to shift from viewing conflicts as a negative phenomenon that needs to be avoided but engaging in conflicts by facing the power imbalance in it squarely (Phipps, 2014) so that they can expand the room for differentness and amplify the unheard voices when facing misunderstanding and conflict in the intercultural encounters. Finally, the national sports governing bodies should be working closely with the stakeholders to build a systematic ICE programme that can support the development of interculturality amongst student-athletes who intend to further their individual, professional sporting careers abroad in return for their long-term contribution to shoulder the weight of national expectation by representing the nation to compete at many international stages.

5.3 Limitations and future directions

To conclude, I reflect on the limitations of this study and present directions for future research. First, as the interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese, subtle meanings may be lost in the process of translation into English (van Nes et al., 2010). Instead of presenting excerpts in English, future research can present text in its untranslated form and include discussions on the multiplicity meanings within a word (Cassin et al., 2014). Such discussion can provide insight into people's understanding of the varying realities represented by the words (Dervin & Simpson, 2021). Secondly, whilst the interview-based study enables me to gain insights into athletes' reflections on their lives abroad, it might be useful to combine interviews with other methods of inquiry to capture different dimensions of social situations where the individual belongs. For example, future studies could collect empirical materials through focus group discussions, a 'non-directive

interviewing' (Hennink et al., 2020, p.157) that excludes the interviewer and can thus 'produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group' (Morgan, 1997, p.2). Recruiting teammates and coaches to join the discussion is desirable for intercultural research which focuses not simply on individual-centred but co-constructive accounts in the specific context (Dervin & Simpson, 2021). Overall, as this research has constructed a rich image of how professional athletes navigate their identity and adjust their communication strategies in different intercultural interaction contexts, I hope it can inspire empirical attention to undertake studies on broader intercultural situations in the professional sporting context, such as how immigrant athletes who stay long term in a foreign country interact with people both within and outside of the sporting context. Those insights and the findings of this study would be of interest to intercultural practitioners, educators, and sports organisations, making unique and original contributions to the IC in the sporting world.

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Appendix I: Example of interview transcription and translation

Interview infomation					
Interviewer (I)	**Respondent (B)**	**Date**	**Duration**	**File name**	**Location**
Dayun Hsing	B (pseudonym)	22nd May 2023	1:25:43	20230522	Microsoft Teams
Before recording					
Small-talk, check consent for participation, and video recording					
Start recording					

Chinese Transcription	English Transcription
I: 我很好奇你在旅外經驗中，是怎麼和不同國家、不同背景文化的人是怎麼互動，還有是怎麼調整自己。	**I:** I am curious about the way you interact with people from different countries, cultures and how you adjust yourself in those interactions when you are playing abroad.
B: 就語言部分的話，一開始去（旅外）就都是未知，試著跟他們講話，然後再從講話的過程中去慢慢的認識這個人。一開始我當然還是滿害怕的，會想不到要跟對方說什麼話題，會不知道問了哪些問題會不會冒犯到他。	**B:** In terms of the use of language, I have no clue what's coming when I first went abroad. I tried to talk to others and gradually get to know this person through conversations. At first, I was still quite scared. I couldn't come up with topics and I was unsure whether I would offend them.
I: 所以你有這個 sense 去跟對方互動？	**I:** So you have a general idea on how to interact with others?
B: 對，我有時候在跟他們聊天的時候會有這個角度，尤其面對來自不同國家的選手，甚至是來自同一個國家的選手但是不同人，我覺得對每個人講話的方式都要有一點點不一樣，畢竟每個人的背景不一樣即便他來自同一個國家。	**B:** Yes, sometimes I keep this (being careful about what to bring up in the conversation) in mind while chatting with them, especially when interacting with players from different countries, and even players from the same country. I think there should be a slight difference in the conversations with different people because everyone has different backgrounds even if they are from the same country.
I: 是用英文嗎？	**I:** You chat with them in English?
B: 用英文，剛去的時候都用英文。像我第一年去西班牙的時候其實那個球隊大概有一半的隊友都是不講英文的，所以就要透過會講英文又會講西班牙文的隊友，去當作中間的溝通者、當作翻譯，所以第一年對我來講確實是…一方面好玩，但在溝通上面滿辛苦的	**B:** English. When I just went abroad I used English. For example, when I first went to Spain, it's quite challenging but interesting at the same time because half of my teammates couldn't speak English and at that time the teammate who can speak both English and Spanish will serve as an interpreter.
I: 這邊溝通上是指球技上還是生活上…？	**I:** Are you referring to the communication about the sporting part or non-sporting life?

B: 生活上也是，生活上有時候會出去…當然生活上就不會覺得那麼有壓力，畢竟你不講話不聊天也不會怎樣，但是你在球場練習或是比賽的時候你必須要很快地去了解彼此在想什麼、彼此要什麼，在那個當下可能壓力就會比較大一點。	**B:** Both. Regarding the communication in non-sporting context, you don't feel as stressed because it's not mandatory for you to talk or chat with others.
I: 在（B 的專長位置）的角色上面，你會覺得更需要有溝通能力嗎？	**I:** The specific position you are playing on the team, do you think you need better communication skills because of that?
B: 我覺得它可能佔的溝通比例可能會再大一些，每一個位置它都必須要做很多很多的溝通的工作，但是因為（B 的專長位置）比較獨特是因為他要面對所有人，他會多更多的機會需要去做溝通。	**B:** I think the communication skills are required to some degree. Each position requires communication skill, but this position is more unique because it's about communicating with everyone. There's definitely more chances for people in the position to communicate with others.
I: 你是怎麼去調整？	**I:** How do you make adjustment regarding communication styles when playing abroad?
B: 到義大利之後，整體大家的英文水準就比較好，因為那裡聯賽每個球隊有一半以上都是外籍選手，所以大家的英文水準都算還不錯，一定都會講，可能有些很好有些差一點，所以當然我的第二外語就是英文，在生活上都算 ok，第一年和第二年相較之下跟別人溝通的方面就比較順利一點，因為不需要透過別人，簡單的對話、對談、討論，都能算是馬上理解。	**B:** After I went to Italy to play, the overall English level is higher there because half of the players on the team are international players. That's why everyone is able to communicate. Some are more competent while some are less competent. Like me, my second language is English so overall I can communicate without any problems. I would say I communicate better with others here comparing to last year because I don't need others to help me understand or exchange information with others.
I: 所以語言上流利度的不同還是會有影響？	**I:** So you think the proficiency in language still influence the communication to some degree?
B: 會，會有影響，我覺得影響滿大的，如果都不同的時候你就要加入很多解釋，肢體語言，就會花比較多時間。我去義大利之前，我有先學一陣子的語言，當隊友在講話我不會完全聽不懂，我會知道他們要什麼東西。	**B:** Yes and I think its influence can be quite strong. If you don't speak the same language, you'll need extra explanations, gestures, and it just take more time. Before I went to Italy, I learnt the language for a while. I won't be completely clueless of what other teammates were saying and I would know what they want.
I: 所以不是母語的選手，你們會聚再一起討論現在是在幹嘛嗎？	**I:** So will the non-Italian native speakers gather around to discuss?
B: 也會，如果語言沒那麼好的選手就會比較靠近，假設說今天有另一個選手語文能	**B:** Sometimes. Those who couldn't understand the language tend to gather

力比我還差，那我就會跟他說，「現在我們可能會要幹嘛」，就是這樣。	together. For example, if there's another player who couldn't understand the instructions, I would tell him, 'We are possibly going to do this now,' something like this.
I: 好強啊	**I:** Wow, you are really good.
B: 有遇過一兩個比較年輕的選手，可能是第一次在國外的聯賽打球，所以他們可能沒有第二外語的基礎	**B:** Players who were relatively younger or playing abroad for the first time tend to be not as competent in foreign language.
I: 有提到說義大利文非母語的選手會比較靠近，是指練習時還是整個互動上都會有種…革命情感、特質比較像這種感覺？	**I:** You mentioned that non-italian speakers tend to gather around… did that happen during practice or was it a more general phenomenon like a comradeship or something?
B: 不會，我覺得這就跟交朋友一樣，有些人跟你頻率比較像，應該是說我講得情況是特別針對在教練只講義大利文，那我們這些聽不懂的、外國人就會聚在一起，就是會看到有兩個 group：義大利人跟外國人，外國人就比較容易聚在一個 group	**B:** No, it's not like that. I reckon it's more like making friends. Some just get along. The situation I mentioned previously only applies when the coach is giving instruction in Italian so for those who couldn't quite get it, like foreigners, would gather around. You could see two groups, the foreigners and the locals.
I: 那如果是在比賽時候的溝通，是喊什麼語言？	**I:** So when you are communicating during the game, what language do you use?
B: 夾著用。所以大家要自由切換語言頻道	**B:** We use a mixed of languages so everyone needs to switch between different languages.
I: 這是一個已經變成直覺了嗎	**I:** It becomes an instinct, isn't it?
B: 要講什麼當然還是會想啊，還是要想一下，但是應該說…像我是不太會講義大利文，當一個會講義大利文跟會講英文的人，他們就會很直覺的知道要跟我講英文。即便他跟我講義大利文會理解，但他會知道這時候我們就直接講英文，就是最快，或者是說，會講英文的義大利選手，他跟我講話的時候，他就會試著全部都講英文	**B:** Still need to consider what you are trying to convey, but I mean, like for those who can speak both Italian and English, they have the instinct to talk to me in English. Even if they know I may understand Italian, they know the most efficient way to convey the message is by using English. It's most effective way.
I: 有類似場上通常會喊什麼話，可以分享一下嗎	**I:** What are the things you talk about during the game?
B: 會，那這些就是義大利文。場上的指示都偏義大利文	**B:** Most of the instructions during the game are delivered in Italian.
I: 你還記得那些義大利文嗎？	**I:** You still remember how to use them?
B: 記得啊，大部分都記得啊，我現在在自己的生活裡，我有時候都會在腦裡突然浮現這個東西的義大利文怎麼講	**B:** Yes, I remember most of them. Even now, when I see something in my daily life, the

	Italian words or phrases of that thing would pop into my mind.
I: 天啊還在語言有深入身體裡	**I:** Wow, the language is deep rooted.
B: 我很喜歡義大利文，也很常聽義大利文的歌曲	**B:** I like Italian very much and I even listen to Italian music.
I: 是因為在那邊生活過的關係嗎	**I:** Is it because you've lived there for a while?
B: 對，比較深入地瞭解這個語言和文化之後，滿喜歡這個語言	**B:** Yes. After I learned more about the language and its culture, I fall for it.
I: 深入了解是指從球場上開始還是生活上跟非球隊的人有互動	**I:** Is it more about the sporting context or is it a reflection on a general living style there?
B: 都有。在那邊打球就是真正在那邊生活，不管球場上、下就是完全在那邊生活的當地人	**B:** Both. When I was a player there, I lived like a local no matter in both sporting and non-sporting context.
I: 是有種把城市認同像家的感覺一樣嗎？	**I:** Is it kind of like making the city feels like home?
B: 需要做這件事。因為如果沒有對這個地方，讓自己能夠定下心來，你很難在這個球隊找到歸屬感。有可能會覺得我不需要為你這麼賣命，或是會懷疑自己跟這個群體格格不入	**B:** You must do that. If not, it will be hard to find a sense of belongings here. You may question your differentness with the group and you may feel that you don't have to put effort into the game for them.
I: 群體的意思是指，這個國家、這個城市、這個球隊還是	**I:** The group here refers to the country, the city, the team, or anything else?
B: 我覺得都是，那大部分當然是球隊，因為我是為球隊工作。球隊都是當地人比較多嘛，如果你一直把自己定位成外國人，那你就會一直以外國人的角色，那如果你可以不管是說服自己，或是你真的讓自己去融入他們的文化、講他們的語言，那你就可以跟他們很靠近，這也會幫助你在工作這個身份上，彼此有更高的認同。	**B:** I think it's everything. Most of it is about the team because I'm working for them. Most of the teammate are locals so if you position yourself as a foreigner, you will live like a foreigner. If you persuade yourself or you truly blend in the culture, speak their language, then you can get much closer to them. This will help you career because others will acknowledge this identity of you.
I: 城市裡面球迷也會認出裡這樣嗎	**I:** The fans also recognise you, don't they.
B: 也會	**B:** Yes.
I: 可以說走在路上認同感很高這樣嗎	**I:** Do you feel a strong sense of acknowledgement when you are just casually walking on the street?
B: 很高，而且因為國外文化他們對體育很熱愛，他們也很尊敬運動選手，所以只要是代表那個城市、那個地區的民眾、居民，就會把你當做自己人，就會無條件支持你。當然如果你表現不好也會罵啦。	**B:** Very. Also, people in the foreign culture have strong passion towards sport and they respect players a lot. So if you play for the team, the citizens in that city will see you as insider, showing their support without condition. On the other hand, if you didn't perform well, you'll get scolded.

I: 是從觀眾席噴嗎？	**I:** From the stand?
B: 場外場外	**B:** Outside the stadium.
I: 不是走在路上	**I:** Not on the street?
B: 走在路上不太會，就是（比賽）當下。他們不會把場上情緒帶到外面去。	**B:** Not so often. Normally they get emotional during the game but they won't take it outside.
I: 有遇過球迷很瘋狂的行為嗎或是讓你覺得備受關注、照顧這種感覺？	**I:** Can you recall any incidents where fans act crazily or impress you?
B: 沒有到那麼誇張，但是當地的球迷，他們會給很多鼓勵。假設說，今天從他們身邊經過，他們可能會叫你名字或想跟你肢體接觸這樣，那你會感受到他是支持你的，他也希望我們這個球隊可以一起變得更好。	**B:** Not that extreme. But the local fans surely show a lot of supports. For example, if you pass by them, they will yell at your name or want to touch you. You can feel that they are really supportive and they really wish the best for the team.
I:他們叫你什麼？	**I:** What do they call you?
B: 我在國外都請他們叫我 X（姓名其中一個字」，因為叫全名有點對他們來說太長了，所以我就請他們叫我 X 就好	**B:** When I'm playing abroad**,** I ask people to call me 'X' (part of B's Chinese name), because my full name is too long for them so I ask to call me X.
I: 但是你的背上是印	**I:** But the name on your jersey is
B: 姓	**B:** My surname.
I: X 有點像是 nickname 嗎對你來說	**I:** So do you think 'X' is kind of like your nickname?
B: 不算	**B:** No.
I: 只是像在國外方便別人叫這樣嗎	**I:** So you are called 'X' when playing abroad because it's easier for others to pronounce?
B: 我覺得對我來講是，我找一個我能夠認同，然後別人、叫的人也能明確又輕鬆的方式來稱呼我。在台灣人我們不是都會幫自己取英文名字嗎，我國小的時候叫做 Jack，應該是補習班取的，長大到國中喜的鼓手叫 Chris，我後來就變成 Chris，但是我一直覺得這些名字都不能代表我，如果別人叫我 Jack、Chris 我都會覺得怪怪的	**B:** Yes, I think so. I use the name that I acknowledge and is easy for others to call me. Growing up in Taiwan, we were either given or chose English names for ourselves, right? I used to be called Jack, a name given by the cram school. I changed it to Chris later because the drummer in a band I was obsessed with has the same name. But I feel like those names don't represent who I am. I always feel weird when someone calls me that.
I: 就不是真的我	**I:** Because you don't feel like it's the real you?
B: 對，不是我。所以在國外才會決定用 X，請他們來稱呼我	**B:** No. That's why I ask people to call me 'X' when I am playing abroad, which is a part of my Chinese name.
I: 這個啟發、想法是從過去國際賽經驗開始還是自己本來就有在想旅外的時候就要這樣做？	**I:** Where did you get this naming inspiration from? Does it come from the international games you've played before, or does it come from your professional career abroad?

B: 對,因為在旅外的時候才會遇到別人怎麼叫你這件事。去國際賽,即便你的背上是繡英文字母是繡姓,但是會叫你的也只有隊友,啊隊友都是講中文,所以不會遇到有外國人需要叫你的英文名字。所以變成說遇到這件事、開始想這件事,是到國外開始打球生活的那時候才做這樣子的決定。	**B:** You only think about this thing when playing abroad. When you play the international game for your country, you have your family name on your back but those who call your name will be your teammates who also speak Chinese, so you don't get called by your English name. In all, this whole English naming revelation of mine is made after I started my career abroad and that's when I decided to be called like that.
I: 這種旅外生涯隊友常常換來換去,就算是在同一隊也會不斷地跟不同人	**I:** When you are playing abroad, even if you stay in the same team, your teammates won't remain exactly the same right?
B: 每年都在換	**B:** Keep changing every year.
I: 你有什麼心得嗎,感覺溝通的方式和給自己的定位都會不斷地轉換	**I:** Do you have any thoughts on this? I feel like there must be changes for your communication styles and how you position yourself.
B: 會,這部分其實滿困擾我的,因為我是一個很慢熟的人,需要很長一段時間才有辦法跟別人建立信任感	**B:** Yes, this part actually bothers me a lot because I am the kind of person who needs a lot of time to build trust in a relationship.
I: 信任感	**I:** Trust you say.
B: 在球場上信任感很重要、默契也很重要,所以在職業球隊裡面每一年大概都會有一半的人離開跟新加入,這對我來講是很大的挑戰。等於說,我可能這個賽季剛開始正在跟這些隊友認識、磨合,賽季過了一半開始覺得大家都已經認識差不多也配合滿好的,很快就到季末,比賽快結束了,大家又都要離開換新的一批,又要重新這個輪迴。所以對我來講心理壓力,應該說挑戰滿大的	**B:** Trust is a very important in sports, so as the chemistry sharing with the team. Thus, it is very challenging for me to get used to the fact that nearly half of the teammate will leave, with new players joining the team. It' like once I start to learn how to work with everyone, the season is getting to an end and a new team is ready to be formed. I need to go through this cycle again. So I think this challenge for me is mentally stressful.
I: 平常是怎麼跟選手不管是場上或生活上是怎麼去磨合,印象深刻的例子有嗎?	**I:** Can you recall any incidents of how you try to get along with others in both sporting and non-sporting context.
B: 沒有,就是直接說	**B:** No, we just talk things through.
I: 面對面,不會用通訊軟體這樣?	**I:** Like in person? You don't use message apps?
B: 不會,外國人太直接了。他們很直接,有問題就會直接說直接問,不會想很久再用訊息說「我覺得你可以怎樣、我可以怎樣」,沒有,就是直接現場搞定	**B:** No, foreigners are really straightforward. If things need to be sorted, they won't think and wait a while to send message saying, 'I think you can do this and I can do that'. No, they sort it out on the spot.
I: 你還記得什麼樣的事嗎?	**I:** Can you recall a specific event?

B:這樣講好了，如果這件事是急事，是現在馬上要有結論的，就會現在馬上說，如果像是我們要檢討說上個禮拜打得怎麼樣，或是下個禮拜遇到誰，那可能就會在回去的時候再討論，或是用訊息再去了解	**B:** Let's put it this way. If something is urgent and needs to be sorted out right away, they will talk it through. But if it's like reviewing the game held in last week, then maybe we would discuss it afterwards or use messages.
I: 比較詳細地去講	**I:** To talk about it in more detail.
B: 對就是看事情的輕重緩急	**B:** Yes, it depends on the order of priority.
I:這些溝通方式是本來在台灣你就有的方式，還是去之後可能有不斷地在改變	**I:** Do you always communicate this way when you are in Taiwan or do you keep adjusting the style?
B: 應該是說在適應。因為在台灣如果跟隊友有些意見、摩擦，你會礙於不好意思講，怕互相有衝突，所以會大概講一個樣子而已，我們常常會說「拍謝、這個我的」，那「這個我的」之後我們要怎麼解決。好，那我知道「這個是你的」，那你要怎麼解決？	**B:** I would say I'm adapting because if you have issues with teammates, you would probably feel reserved and not to talk about it to avoid conflicts, so maybe you only say things very generally and vaguely. Often we say 'sorry' or 'this is mine' on the court but how are we exactly going to solve the problem? I know 'it's yours', then what are you exactly going to solve this problem?
I: 對，好像常常停在那裡就沒了	**I:** Yes. Feels like the conversation ends there.
B: 對就沒了，但是在國外這件事情不會發生	**B:** That's all. But it doesn't work the same in foreign countries.
I: 那會有拍謝這種事嗎	**I:** Do you say sorry as well?
B: 也會有拍謝，但是會馬上說要怎樣	**B:** You still say it, but you also talk about what are you going to do to solve the problem.
I: 球員很自主地說…	**I:** The players just do that without being instructed to do so?
B: 對，會講說接下來要怎樣，我們得怎樣，沒有模糊地帶	**B:** Yes. We talk about what should be done next or exactly what we should do. There is no gray area.
I: 所以才會說這是適應	**I:** So that's why you say you adapt to this style.
B: 對適應啊，我剛去的時候這是壓力，因為他們很直接，因為外國人就是這種方式，我只能說他們很直接，因為我們不是這種特性、個性的文化，所以剛去的時候會覺得「哇！他講話怎麼這麼直」，好像攻擊性很強，但其實完全沒有。他們就是「我想解決問題」，那這個問題解決完之後，我們就沒事了。即便那個當下大家是有情緒的，可是講完那個情緒就結束了	**B:** Yes. In the beginning, this kind of communication styles makes me stressful because they are too straightforward. It's foreigners' style of communication. But in our culture, we are not familiar with such style. Therefore, in the beginning, I thought 'Woah, he's pretty blunt and straightforward' and felt they are aggressive. But in fact, it's nothing like that. They just wanted to sort things out and after things are sorted, we just go back to normal. Even we are emotional at the moment, but once we talk it through, we won't stay emotional.

I: 你也有當過發話的那個人嗎	**I:** Have you ever been the one to start the talking?
B: 沒有沒有	**B:** No.
I: 但假如你有不認同指導或是之類的	**I:** What did you do if you have issues with the instruction?
B: 我會去找他們但是我不會跟他說…我不會這麼 aggressive。我很願意去找他們溝通，但是我的態度跟我的語氣會是比較柔軟的。	**B:** I go to them as well but I won't be this aggressive. I am willing to take the initiative to sort things out but my attitude and the tone of my speech will be softer.
I: 這可能是跟個性有關的嗎？	**I:** Is it related to your personality?
B: 跟我本人的個性有關	**B:** Yes, it's who I am.
I: 就是這種風格的選手	**I:** You are the player with such style.
I: 剛剛前面有提到「我們」文化的選手不會這麼 aggressive 溝通，是指	**I:** You mentioned 'we' won't be as aggressive when communicating with others, who are you referring to?
B: 台灣人吧，認真想起來應該是台灣人	**B:** I would say it's Taiwanese people.
I: 其他合作過的其他國家的人也是比較 aggressive 地在溝通嗎還是	**I:** Have you ever worked with people from other countries who also adopt a more aggressive communication style?
B: 還是有程度上的差異，如果以黑跟白來看，當然是歐美人跟亞洲人比較不一樣	**B:** The degree of aggressiveness is different but if we're putting things on a dichotomy, then Asians and western people are definitely different.
I: 就是包括日本的選手你有合作過的	**I:** You've worked with Japanese players.
B: 日本選手我有合作過，他們也算是比較溫和一點的，因為日本每個都要一直敬禮，所以日本人也都是很有禮貌	**B:** I've worked with them. They are more gentle because they bow a lot so that's why they are polite.
I: 這種個性不會國外聯賽出現	**I:** Such personality won't be so salient in the foreign league?
B: 不會。應該是說有很多每個國家本來的文化，假設日本人去到國外就不會對別人一直敬禮，或者是韓國人有機會去國外跟別人喝酒也不會躲起來喝，這個只限在自己國家的時候，當然那個習慣跟飲食都會跟著我們，但是那個程度就會降低很多	**B:** No. I would say that every country has its own culture. If Japanese people go abroad, they won't have to bow to others all the time. Or Korean people won' have to turn their heads when drinking with seniors. It's a norm that applies only in your own country. Certainly, we keep those habits and diet but they have less influence on us.
I: 所以等於台灣運動文化、或台灣生活文化的這一面在旅外的時候沒有情境可以讓你展現？	**I:** So when you are abroad, the way you used to act under Taiwan's sport culture or the overall culture won't be existed because the context is different.
B: 有存在但是你會被那邊的人影響，假設我是一個很溫和的人，我在那邊再多待個	**B:** It's still there but you are influenced by people abroad. If I am a gentle person, I may

幾年，我就會變得比較 aggressive 一點，我覺得會，我覺得這很明顯	become more aggressive if I stay there for a few more years. I think it's obvious.
I: 光是待兩三年可能就不一樣了	**I:** Maybe just two or three years
B: 不一定會真的變成那個樣子，但是你會知道說你應該用什麼樣的方式去跟他們相處	**B:** It's not like you truly turn into a different person but you will know how to get along with them.
I: 有點策略的不同	**I:** Like different strategies to interact with them.
B: 所以當自己了解對方是這樣的時候，你慢慢就會去忽略掉一些你本來很在意的訊息。例如說，他們很情緒化，一開始我就會覺得他們可能是在對誰生氣，或是他們在對我生氣，或是他們脾氣不好，但適應之後就會知道他們情緒很直，只要把這個情緒卸掉之後，馬上就會回到原本的樣子，他也沒有針對誰，可能是對自己表現的不滿意，他生氣。	**B:** So when you get to know it's what they are like, you start to ignore things that you used to care a lot about. For example, as they are very emotional person, I used to think they are holding grudges to someone or me or they just have bad temper, but as I get used to that, I learn that they just don't hide their emotions. Once they get over with it, they'll be back to normal. They are not angry to any particular person but could be just dissatisfied with their own performance.
I: 生悶氣？	**I:** Turn the anger inward?
B: 他沒有生悶氣，他可能會大叫，可能會踢球，可能會大罵，但他罵完他的情緒也就結束了	**B:** No not like that. they may still shout out loud, kick the ball, or swear but once they finish it, the anger is gone.
I: 那假如你在比賽中有跟對手或是裁判有需要溝通、或有不太爽的情緒，你也是會用比較 aggressive 的方式去講嗎？還是用原本的方式在台灣習慣的方式？	**I:** What if you are pissed in the game and want to talk to opponents or the referees, will you communicate in a more aggressive way or do you do things in the usual way just like in Taiwan?
B: 我一開始去（旅外）的時候，因為一來我是外國人、二來是我不是隊長，所以我不太有機會去跟裁判做爭執。那在練習的時候，我曾經有一兩次，隊友很煩的時候，我講了一兩句比較不好聽的話，我第一次這樣	**B:** In the beginning of my foreign career, I didn't have chance to argue with the referee because I am a foreigner, and I am not the captain. During practice, there were one or two times that I lashed out at my teammates. I've never done such thing before.
I: 你講什麼文	**I:** What language did you use?
B: 我講英文。然後有一次在義大利比賽的時候，對方一直揮（鬧），我就看著他們，那時候就很不耐煩的臉，不是講英文也不是講義大利文，我就用台語譙（ㄍㄧㄠˇ）他們	**B:** English. Then, there's a time when we were playing against opponents who were trying to intimidate us. I stared at them impatiently and swore in Taiwanese.
I: 太帥了吧	**Interviewer:** Wow!

B: 那時候就很生氣，我就看著他們就譙了，那這個以前在台灣就沒有（發生），因為禮貌嘛，一方面是講了大家會聽得懂	**B:** Because I was very pissed. This has never happened when I was playing in Taiwan, because I need to maintain manners, and if I did that everyone would know what I'm talking about.
I: 感覺台灣 旅外的那一面有出來成為宣洩情緒的部分	**Interviewer:** Feels like you can show your emotions more when competing abroad.
B: 對，因為對他們（國外選手）來講，他們也沒放在心上。因為他們是這樣的人啊，所以他們也不會去把別人的情緒放在身上	**B:** Yes, because for the foreign players, they are the kind of people that don't mind trash talking. They won't be affected by others' emotions.
I: 好特別的觀察，就是他們情緒來得快去得快	**Interviewer:** Their emotions are easy come, easy go. You made interesting observation.
B: 對啊所以他們對別人的情緒就很日常，但是這是我剛剛想到的，我指的是「他們也不會對你的情緒放在心上」是我剛剛想到的。但我在那邊的時候不會那樣想，（在那邊的時候）我會覺得我的情緒也有影響到別人	**B:** Yes. But I actually came across this idea just now. I mean, the idea that 'they won't be affected by others emotion'. When I was playing abroad, I didn't think it this way. Instead, I always thought my emotions could affect others.
I: 我有看到照片上有很多球迷去幫你加油是義大利當地台灣人嗎？好像還有拿國旗、還是活動旗	**I:** I saw a lot of fans go to the games with flags to cheer for you. Are they Taiwanese people who live there or?
B:「台灣魂」是從台灣一起去的朋友，那國旗的話大部分都是在義大利生活的台灣人	**B:** The flag with 'Taiwan spirit' are brought their by friends from Taiwan and the national flag are mostly brought by local Taiwanese people.
I: 會對你在比賽上、心態上有什麼不一樣影響嗎？	**I:** Will their presence influence you?
B: 會覺得超興奮的啊，就終於有認識的人來看我打球。是興奮，還有就覺得支持就是在那邊，你不是一個人在外面孤軍奮戰，是有國人、不認識的人但是他們願意來這個地方幫你加油。很溫暖，那個感覺是很溫暖、很興奮	**B:** I feel super excited! Finally someone I know come to see me playing. It's a strong sense of excitement and the sense of support. It's like you are not fighting alone abroad, but there are Taiwanese people who don't know you willing to come to the game to cheer for you. It's heartwarming and exciting.
I: 沒有那種壓力我要代表台灣表現很好	**I:** Not the sense of pressure… like you have to play well for Taiwan.
A: 沒有，在那個場合就是很興奮	**B:** No. Just pure excitement at that moment.
I: 這些支持都是讓你更認同義大利文化嗎，認同文化是另外一回事？	**I:** Does the support from Italian-Taiwanese people make you acknowledge the Italian culture?

B: 不是這是另外一件事	**B:** No, it's not related.
I: 前面提到很認同義大利文化是從哪方面	**I:** Then what makes you said that you acknowledge Italian culture previously?
B: 你說認同嗎？沒有認同，是喜歡。我不用去認同他的文化但是我可能要去喜歡他的文化。超喜歡義大利的，啊我就很討厭西班牙	**B:** Acknowledge it? Not acknowledge but to like it. I don't have to acknowledge their culture but I have to like the culture right? I really like Italy but I hate Spain.
I: 那個喜歡是從什麼開始，是從人開始嗎還是飲食	**I:** What makes you think it that way? The people, the diet?
B: 是從人，然後環境、天氣、語言，天氣西班牙和義大利差不多啦，常常是藍天、氣候乾燥，就算氣溫高但也是舒服的。那語言的話，可能都是偏拉丁語系，所以文法規則都是差不多。我不喜歡西班牙文的原因是西班牙文都糊在一起	**B:** The people, the environment, the weather, the language. Well, the weather are pretty much the same in both countries. It's mostly sunny and dry. As for the language, they are Latin language so they share similar grammar patterns. The reason why I don't like Spanish language is that it sounds like everything's mixed together.
I: 打舌嗎	**I:** The tongue twisters?
B: 打舌還有他們有很多，就是他們講一句話是全部都是連音連在一起，所以很難去判斷他們講什麼。義大利文的話雖然規則、字很像，但語調是清楚的，所以對我來說我會很喜歡義大利文是因為我聽得清楚而且我學也沒有這麼難	**B:** There are more. It's a non-distinct tone of voice where everything just mix together in a sentence so it's difficult to understand what they are talking about. Although the pattern, phrases in Italian language are very similar to that, but each word is spoken very clearly. That's why I like Italian language more because I can tell the sounds apart and it's fairly easy for me to learn.
I: 比較有成就感	**I:** That sense of achievement.
B: 對對對	**B:** Exactly.
I: 所以是人、語言、整個大環境	**I:** So it's about people, language, and the overall environment.
B: 大環境的話，西班牙人太懶了	**B:** Generally speaking, the Spaniards are lazy.
I: 是怎麼觀察到這點的	**Interviewer:** How do you come to this conclusion?
B: 那義大利人、義大利國家就是他們比較按部就班	**B:** The Italians do things in an orderly manner.
I: 這是你觀察到的?	**Interviewer:** Is this what you observed when playing abroad?
B:在那邊生活就會知道，義大利人相對來說比較有計劃，而且會跟著那個時間點去走	**B:** You just know it as long as you live there. Italians are more like the planning type and they follow the plan.
I: 是在球隊跟生活都是這樣嗎	**I:** In the sporting context and in general context?
B: 都是這樣，西班牙人就是…	**B:** Both. They are just..

I: 做事風格比較不對你的 tone 嗎	**I:** Their working style is not the same as you?
B: 完全不對	**B:** Totally not.
I: 這是只要有到當地才會知道，因為也不可能去預測	**I:** You can only learn about this when you truly go there right? You cannot predict such thing.
B: 你去旅遊你不會覺得這些事情你會喜歡或不喜歡，是真得要在那邊住一陣子之後，你才會知道說，到底那邊是什麼樣的一個情況	**B:** Even when you are just traveling there you won't know if you truly like the place or not. It's after you've lived there for a while that you start to know what it's really like.
I: 遇到什麼樣的人可能也會有影響	**I:** It is also influenced by the people you come across with.
B: 對	**B:** Yes.
I: 完全是未知的	**I:** It's unknown.
B: 雖然他們在隔壁，完全是兩個不同的國家	**B:** Two countries are sitting next to each other but they are totally different.
I: 欸不過你後來又有回西班牙，回去後，那時候感受是一樣的嗎，還是有改變	**I:** But you returned to Spain afterwards, right? Did you still find it the same as your previous stay?
B: 感受是一樣的，完全一樣的啊	**B:** Exactly the same.
I: 我以為會不一樣	**I:** I thought there would be a slight difference.
B: 好啦有一點不一樣，因為我第一年去的球隊是很小、不太好的球隊，我最後去的是第一名的球隊，所以他們在做事就有比較規律一點	**B:** Alright it's a bit different because the team I played for previously is fairly small and ranked lower, whereas the team I joined later ranked number one so they do things more orderly.
I: 包括隊友跟生活上遇到的人？	**I:** You mean your teammates and the people you meet generally?
B: 生活上遇到的人沒有。那是因為在這個球隊，這個球隊有規模，所以他們就會知道說我們現在應該做什麼事。會去那個球隊的球員，也都是相對比較成熟的球員，所以大家都會知道說，我要做什麼的時候就是要做什麼	**B:** Generally, it's the same but it's different on the team because the team is very organised so they know what to do in the exact time and also the players who join the team are relatively mature so everyone know what should be done at what time.
I: 遲到這種	**I:** Like not being late.
B: 遲到包括在裡面，你會覺得態度懶散	**B:** It's part of that. Like the lazy attitude.
I: 這算是球隊文化的一部分嗎	**I:** You think it's part of the team culture?
B: 也會是，如果球隊文化是懶散的，球員也會變懶散	**B:** Kind of. If a team culture is lazy then the player will become lazy.
I: 這個風格就是跟你不對盤	**I:** This is not your style.
B: 不對盤	**B:** Totally not.

I: 原來都會有影響	**I:** I didn't know it's such a huge influence.
B: 會有影響啊我剛開始去完全沒辦法適應，在台灣的長輩就有曾經跟我講過說，雖然我們的做事方式很積極，但是你去到那個地方，你就要想辦法融入他們，不然痛苦的人會是你自己，他們不會怎樣	**B:** It is. In the beginning it's hard to adapt to it but the seniors in Taiwan told me even if we are very proactive but when you are playing there, you have to blend in, otherwise you will be the only one suffering not them.
I: 改變不了他們的感覺	**I:** It's like you cannot change other people.
B: 你需要去融入他們的文化，你才有辦法跟他們成為一體	**B:** You have to blend in their culture to become part of them.
I: 這個融入的部分是指要壓抑自己比較…	**I:** Does it mean you have to suppress part of your…
B: 不是，是要去接受他們就是這樣的人，但你不會改變你是積極的人這個事實。你一樣會是積極的	**B:** No, it means that you have to accept they are what they are. But at the same time you remain as a proactive person.
I: 認識世界上原來有這種選手的感覺	**I:** Like knowing that there are this kind of player in the world.
B: 可以這樣解釋，你就要知道西班牙就是這樣，整個西班牙國家它的風格就是這樣	**B:** Kind of. You have to know this is the Spanish style and the whole country share this style.
I: 旅外的時候在那邊多久才 pick up、不同選手的英文口音	**I:** How long did it take you to get used to the accent of non-native English speakers?
B: 很難量化欸	**B:** It's hard to quantify it.
I: 很快就適應這樣	**I:** It didn't take too long?
B: 我覺得算滿快的，每天都在面對那樣的人，沒有花太多時間	**B:** I think I picked it up pretty quick because I interacted with those people every day.
I: 連思考邏輯都變成英文嗎？	**I:** You also think in English?
B: 不會不會，還沒有	**B:** No not yet.
I: 多待幾年可能就會有	**I:** Maybe if you stay a few more years, you'll be able to do that.
I: 真的很謝謝你分享這麼多	**I:** Thank you for sharing a lot with me.
B: 算脫稿了嗎	**B:** Did we go off the script?
I: 因為不同項目選手每個人經歷都不一樣，所以訪問的時候就會跟著你們的心得去走	**I:** Because all players have very unique experience, so I go with the flow in the interview.
B: 我想說還是有訪談大綱	**B:** We still have the interview guidance.
I: 對我有做訪談大綱但我發現好像不能照著走，因為大家的經驗都不同，遇到的事都不一樣，大家都太特別了，不好意思，訪問大綱有跟沒有一樣	**I:** Yes but then I reckon that it's not appropriate to do the interview according to the guidance because everyone has very unique experience. Sorry for not following the guidance I sent you previously.
B: 沒關係因為我也沒時間看啊	**B:** That's alright because I didn't have time to read through that.

I: 我知道字太多了不好意思	**I:** There's a lot to read through I know. Sorry for that.
B: 不是字太多,是因為我看得再仔細,到時候講的也是另外一回事	**B:** Not because there's a lot but because no matter how thoroughly I've read it through, when I'm sharing my experience with you, I will talk about totally different thing.
I: 對這個研究就是想從你們的視角去看世界,因為這個經歷真的太獨特,雖然有很多人在國外唸書但是在國外打球這件事,當職業選手這件事是很獨特的經歷,很多新世代也把這個當作是目標,所以希望這個研究在跨文化經驗上可以為台灣雙語教育有貢獻,因為台灣雙語教育是個大議題	**I:** The purpose of this interview is to look at things from your point of view. There are lots of people studying abroad but you have such unique experience as a professional athlete playing abroad. A lot of kids also set it as their goal. That's why I hope this research can be contributing to Taiwan's bilingual education, which is a hot topic in education field now.
B: 對 大學也都在開雙語課程	**B:** Yes, a lot of universities are doing bilingual courses right now.
I: 對 但是大家只想著要跟講英文的人互動,沒有想過是要跟來自不同背景的人互動,心態應該要早一點培養 真的很謝謝你,那接下來幾天我會把訪談打成逐字稿寄給你	**I:** Yes. But people only think about interacting with those who speak English but they ignore we are more than interacting with people who speak English but with people from very diverse background. This kind of mindset is important. Thank you again for sharing your thoughts and I will send you the transcript…
B: 結束了喔	**B:** Is it the end of the interview?
I: 剛剛我有漏掉什麼對你旅外很重要的轉捩點嗎	**I:** Yes, is there anything you'd like to share about regarding your time competing abroad.
B: 沒有,你不問我就想不到了	**B:** No. If you don't ask about it, I won't come up with things to say.
I: 其實我本來想問,你對新世代後輩或同輩選手不管是受限於太遠、文化或語言隔閡,但是他們可能想去旅外,你有什麼建議或想法嗎	**I:** I actually want to ask you about the suggestion for the younger generation or your peers who may want to build a career about but are hesitant to do whether because of the distance, culture or language barriers.
B: 我會很不負責任的說就去再說,因為你沒去過你就是擔心那些未知,但那些擔心就只是你的擔心,但會不會發生、是不是真的那樣子,你要去了之後才知道,那假設說這些學弟學妹們因為現階段外語能力沒那麼好不敢去,我也會鼓勵他們說,你去了,聽不懂沒關係,因為這本身就是學習的一部分。你在這個過程當中,在這個聽不懂的過程當中,你就會去學到很多事情、看到很多事情,算是對自己的一種測驗	**B:** I'll irresponsibility say this, 'just do it', because if you didn't try, all the worries and uncertainties remain unknown because you won't know if they are true unless you go abroad. If the younger generation is hesitant to go abroad because of the language barrier, I still want to encourage them that, being clueless of what others are saying is a part of learning. In the process of not knowing, you will learn and see a lot of things. It's like a test for yourself.

I: 測驗？	**I:** A test?
B: 就是你經歷這樣的事情後，你是不是還喜歡繼續做這件事，或是發現這個不是我的東西我就不做了，你要去經歷過才會知道說你會不會繼續走下去	**B:** Like after such experience, will you still want to keep doing it or you figure out that this is not my thing and stop doing it. You have to go through everything to know if you want to keep doing it.
I: 就像你走過這條路一樣	**I:** Just like how you did it.
B: 我當初去的時候就完全是這個想法	**B:** This is exactly what I thought to myself before going abroad.
I: 當初就是沒有想那麼多先去再說	**I:** You didn't think much before going?
B: 我當初就是覺得先去再說，那如果一年表現不好被打回來，那就這樣啊，至少我去試過了	**B:** I thought to myself, just do it first. If I didn't perform well and was sent back, at least I've tried. It is what it is.
I: 這個心態很重要	**I:** This mindset is magnificent.
B: 當時我對自己的英文能力也完全沒什麼信心，就是簡單溝通都可以，但是要我流暢的跟別人講兩三句話，這我完全辦不到，可是當時我就覺得就先去了啊，去了見招拆招，能怎麼辦就怎麼辦	**B:** I was not confident at all with my English skills. Just basic conversation level but not a the level where you can speak fluently with others. But I still decided to go and respond to whatever problems that arise.
I: 就像在打球一樣見招拆招	**I:** It's like sports you act and respond to whatever come in that moment.
B: 對啊，那如果你都沒去，你就是什麼都沒發生，好的也沒發生、壞的也沒發生，就是那樣	**B:** Exactly. Nothing happens in your life when you remain there. Nothing good and nothing bad. That's all.
I: 好的壞的都會加總在一起成為人生養分	**I:** The good and bad mix together and become the ingredients for life.
B: 對啊，所以年輕世代的話就是鼓勵他們去，害怕就害怕，但你先踏出去再說	**B:** Exactly. So I want to encourage the younger generation to just do it. You don't have to be fearless, but you have to step outside your comfort zone first.
End of recording: mention about the thank-you token for the participation and the information for checking transcript	

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Appendix II: Information sheet and consent form

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

研究計畫說明及受訪者同意書
INFORMATION SHEET AND INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

您好，我是英國愛丁堡大學語言與跨文化溝通（Language and Intercultural Communication）碩士生行大昀，目前正在研究旅外台灣運動員的跨文化經驗。

My name is Dayun Hsing, a master's student from the MSc Language and Intercultural Communication programme at the University of Edinburgh. I am conducting a research study to learn more about the intercultural experience of Taiwanese professional athletes who pursue a career abroad.

研究主題：以跨文化流動視角探討職業旅外台灣運動員在海外的適應過程（A liquid approach to the study of acculturation of elite Taiwanese athletes playing abroad）

此研究旨在探究兩個研究問題：

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. 職業台灣運動選手如何詮釋自身效力於國外運動俱樂部所經歷的跨文化體驗？

   How do elite Taiwanese athletes make sense of their intercultural experience when playing in sports clubs abroad?

2. 承上，他們和球隊相關人員（例如隊友、教練、裁判、媒體、球迷）相處時及日常生活與人互動時，如何採取不同的溝通策略及在不同身份間進行轉換及構建？

   How do they navigate their communication strategies and identities when co-constructing with stakeholders in the club (e.g., teammates, coaches, technical officials, journalists, fans) and outside of the club?

很榮幸能邀請您參與這份研究，請撥冗閱讀以下研究說明。若有任何疑問或希望討論的部分，歡迎您隨時提出，我必竭力回答。待您閱讀文件並了解研究後，再請您決定是否參與訪談。

You are invited to take part in this research. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with me if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like to know more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

研究目的 Purpose of the study

此學術研究旨在探討旅外台灣職業運動選手的跨文化經驗，進一步了解選手在旅外生涯的溝通方式及身份建構的方式。作為語言與跨文化專業的研究生，我對於選手在不同情境下採取的溝通策略及其身份轉化的方式很有興趣。希望這份研究的成果能從跨文化流動的視角提供台灣教育工作者在設計課程和教科書上的啟發及理論基礎，協助有志旅外的學生運動員發展其跨文化能力。

The study aims to explore the intercultural experience of elite Taiwanese athletes playing abroad as well as the interplay between one's identity and communication. As a MSc Language and Intercultural Communication student, I am interested in learning how athletes who are playing abroad negotiate multiple identities and adopt different communication strategies to thrive in the club. The findings of the study aim to provide suggestions based on a liquid perspective for language teachers in Taiwan to design courses and textbooks that can help develop intercultural skills amongst student athletes who hope to seek a professional sports career abroad.

研究資料的使用方式 How the data will be used

訪談資料會由我整理成逐字稿並回傳給您確認是否能使用，您有權刪除任何不希望被放入研究的內容。我會善盡隱私保護的責任，受訪內容以匿名處理並去除任何可識別受訪者身份的資訊。研究內容僅會作為此份學術研究的資料，不會作為其他用途。所有資料將儲存於 OneDrive 加密資料夾，儲存期限至多為 5 年（考量期刊論文發表的可能性），本研究將善盡資料保密責任，敬請放心。

The interview will be recorded and the data from the video/audio files will be transcribed and analysed by me. The transcript will need your approval to be used. You have the right to delete any content from the interview. I will keep all the data and your information confidential and anonymous– pseudonyms will be used for my MSc dissertation and any other official publications, and you will not be identifiable. The data will be stored in OneDrive for up to five years due to the possibility of publication in academic journals.

研究參與者條件 To participate in the research

- 您的母語必須至少為以下三者其一：國語、閩南/客家語、南島語言。
  You must be either native Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese dialects, or Formosan languages speakers.
- 您過去曾經以運動員身份在台灣度過學生生涯。
  You must be an athlete who spent their student life in Taiwan.
- 您曾經效力於國外（台灣以外）的職業運動隊伍。
  You must have the experience of playing for at least one professional team sports club outside of Taiwan.

研究參與的潛在受益 Benefits of the project

透過參與這份研究，您會更了解您在旅外生活時的跨文化溝通方式。若您有興趣，我會在研究結束後彙整一份匿名化的研究成果供您參考。

By taking part in this research project, you will develop better understanding of your perspectives on intercultural communication when playing in a foreign sports club. An anonymized summary of the project's findings will be made available to you after the project's completion and can be used for reflection and professional development.

研究參與的潛在風險 Are there any risks?
參與這份研究並沒有任何已知風險。研究撰寫時，您的相關資料皆會以匿名處理。且您具有隨時退出研究且無需提供理由的權理。

There are no known risks in your participation. What you tell me will be completely anonymized in the write up of my research. You can withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

若您有意願參與研究，敬請協助填寫下方的受訪同意書，並回傳附有您電子簽名的檔案到我的學校信箱 s2249238@ed.ac.uk

I would like to take part – what to do next? Please fill in the attached Interview Consent Form and email it to me at s2249238@ed.ac.uk

對於研究內容有任何疑問，歡迎您隨時寄信與我或我的研究指導老師 **Dr. Ashley Simpson**(ashley.simpson@ed.ac.uk) 聯繫。

If you need further information, you can contact me, or my supervisor, Dr. Ashley Simpson, at the University of Edinburgh: ashley.simpson@ed.ac.uk

再次感謝您的協助。
Thank you very much for your help!

愛丁堡大學碩士生 行大昀 Dayun Hsing 敬上
May 12th 2023

Appendix III: Interview consent from

研究受訪者同意書 （電子簽名）
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM (E-SIGNATURE)

這份同意書要求研究者遵循學術倫理，並確保您（參與者）了解研究的目的以及訪談資料會如何被使用。訪談時間大約需要 30-50 分鐘。

This consent form is necessary to ensure that the ethical procedures for academic research are followed and that you, the participant, understand the purpose of the research and how the information contained in the interviews will be used. The interview will take approximately 30-50 minutes.

簽署這份受訪者同意書，代表您同意以下聲明
By signing this form, you certify that you agree with the following:

- 我已經閱讀並清楚了解這份研究計畫內容

  I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study

- 我了解這份研究是採取自願參與，並且無論在研究的任何階段，參與者能夠無條件退出研究計畫

  I understand that participation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any point without giving a reason

- 我有獲得充分的時間決定是否參與研究且有被賦予提問的機會。我的疑問也有獲得詳盡且滿意的回覆

  I have been given the opportunity to consider the information provided, ask questions regarding to the research and have been answered to my satisfaction

- 我同意在採訪過程中進行錄影及錄音

  I agree to my interview being video and audio recorded

- 我了解我的個人資料不會被分享給任何人，且除了被作為這份學術研究的資料使用外，我的任何資料不會被轉為其他用途

  I understand that my personal information will not be shared with anyone or used for any other purpose.

簽名 Signature（中文即可）：_____ 日期 Date: _____